

**LEADING CELEBRITIES TO SLAUGHTER  
BARBARA AMIEL ON MICHAEL JACKSON**

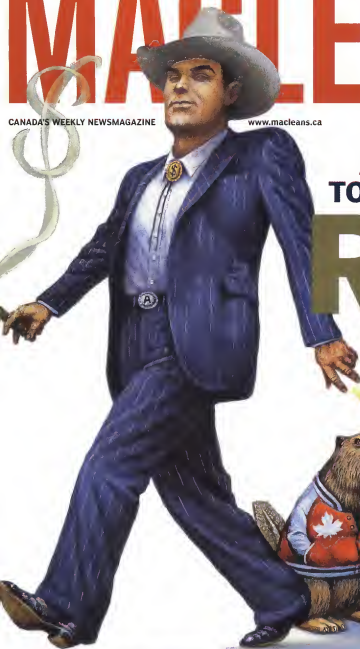


# MACLEAN'S

CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

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JUNE 13 2005



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## HUMAN AURA: WEAK

June 1

a big bird, walking around similarly, with no point or politics. Stephen Harper is Cuckoo Monster: "war-gone, war-past" Jack Layton is Oscar the Grouch, supporting corruption, alienating voters, and Colleen Duggan is Shuffiebaggar, a nortwestern entity who stands ready and then only when there are personal interests at issue. "We the electorate, who should control these impostor" attitudes, have lost our voice to their voices of scandal, irresponsibility and defeat. I will vote for anyone who bows down, terror and civility.

Ken Whitehead, Berwick, N.S.

I don't think it was Stephen Harper's responsibility to keep behind Smeach happy Rutherford, she, as an elected official, had a responsibility to the constituents who voted her in under the Conservative party banner. She had other options besides taking a cabinet position on the Liberal give-

upstream. Her decision shows a lack of integrity and morality.

Carol Edwards, Newmarket, Ont.

## Questions about Judy Sgro

Former immigration minister Judy Sgro's claims of conversion are outrageous. "We're subject to all kinds of people making accusations," *The Maclean's* interview, May 23. In a letter responding to Sgro's request for private advice on fast-tracking a minister's permit to Allen Buchanan, Ethics Commissioner Bernard Shapiro said Sgro was in a conflict of interest, put there by her staff. Her office tarnished the integrity of Canada's immigration system. Ministers are accountable for the actions of their department and staff. The commissioner further stated that he has completed his report on several other allegations of wrongdoing by the former minister. Unfortunately, the report has yet to be released and, unlike

with Gomery where evidence is released daily, we must rely on Shapiro's report before any conclusions can be drawn. There are still important questions to be answered regarding the conduct of this former minister and her office.

Oliver Alderton, MP, Calgary-North West, Canada

## A royal drubbing

Between your articles on Camilla Parker Bowles in your April 11 issue and Queen Elizabeth II on your May 23 cover, a portrait ensue part of your magazine was wasted on the so-called royal family. Why are we being subjected to the kind of drivel that is usually reserved for the tabloid press? These people have little or no influence in their own country, let alone ours. Please stop writing about them, or I will be forced to subscribe to another magazine that actually discusses issues.

Chad Connolly, Vancouver, B.C.

Your story on Queen Elizabeth II stated that, "After 52 years on the throne, she... has the satisfaction of knowing that only one English monarch has ever reigned for longer and that the way will lay with Queen Victoria's 64 years." Queen Victoria actually reigned for 63 years, while George III ruled for 59 years and Henry III was on the throne for 56 years. So, they are all well ahead of Elizabeth II. Such a simple goal does not give the reader confidence in your writer's other assessments.

Gloria Serrano, Victoria

## More obscure than Hemlock

After reading *The Maclean's* interview with producer Michael Seltzer about his film *Deadly* ("I've been surprised by the anger about *Deadly* getting out," May 30), I was greatly disappointed. Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty should not be selling people to boycott the film just because it is based on the crimes of Hemlock and Paul Bernardo. I agree that the subject matter is questionable. But it is important to remember that, as an adult, one has a choice as to whether or not one watches this or any other film. A ban is more obscure than anything that will appear in this issue. If you don't like it, don't go to watch it. But don't dream of selling somebody the what they can or can not choose to view.

Derek Tully, Princeton, Ont.

## MACLEAN'S

LIFE AND WORK IN CANADA

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## WORLD

**KARACHI RIOTS** An angry mob smashed shops and torched a Kennedy Fried-Chain outlet in Karachi, viewing it as a symbol of "Washington and its ally, the Pakistani government, which have failed to protect them from an upsurge in sectarian violence. Six KFC workers died. The spark for the rioting was a spectacular bomb attack by Sunni extremists, said to be allied with al-Qaeda, on a Shia mosque, five people were killed and scores wounded. It was one of a growing number of attacks by extremist Muslims against other Muslims.

**SADDAM Iraq's new president, Jalal Talabani, said his country intends to put former dictator Saddam Hussein on trial within two months—a much earlier timetable than U.S. and Iraqi jurists have predicted.**

**MOROCCO** Insurgent attacks continued to increase. May saw the highest number of U.S. military casualties—77 dead—since January, when the Iraq elections were held.

**SUDAN** Sudanese arrested two top officials with the aid group Doctors Without Borders, charging them with making false reports about malaria rates in the war-torn region of Darfur. The arrests came to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan arrived in Sudan to push the case for more international aid. Sudanese officials later suggested the charges would be dropped.

BY GUY BARRAGE



**INSTANT HOMELESS** In two-week outbreaks, riotously on trains, Zimbabwe police have destroyed thousands of shacks around the capital, Harare, and other big centers. Nearly 25,000 people have been arrested and, some say, over 200,000 have been forced to leave.

**SPYING** Israeli police said they have busted a huge computer spy ring, set up, they believe, by Israeli media and telecom companies. Twenty people have been arrested, two in the U.K. The perpetrator used Trojan Horse computer viruses to hack into the systems of rivals and glean proprietary in-

formation. Police believe the viruses may have been used to access an array of 60 large companies around the world.

On the peace front, Israel released nearly 400 Palestinian prisoners, fulfilling a pledge made during high-level talks in February between Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas. The two are to meet again June 21.

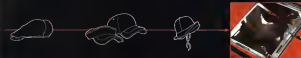
**MCCARTNEY MURDER** After nearly six months of pleading for witnesses to come forward, police in Northern Ireland arrested two men in the high-profile pub murder of Belfast's Robert McCartney in January. The McCartney sisters have said the murder was witnessed by local IRA officials, and have taken their campaign for justice all the way to the White House.

## HEALTH/SCIENCE

**SEX GENE** U.S. and Austrian researchers have found a master sex gene in fruit flies that can change their sexual orientation. When the male variant is transplanted into female flies, it makes them chase after desirable females; the female variant appears to make only fruit flies turn their attention to other males. Scientists don't know if humans have a similar genetic switch, but the finding will certainly add spice to the debate over whether sexuality is genetically set or learned.

Swiss researchers claim to have found biological bases for trust, oxytocin, a hormone that is generated by organs, among other

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endowments, and it said to help cows give more milk and wild animals overcome their fear of humanity. Meanwhile, researchers in Philadelphia find reasons of people in the midst of a **bestowed** romance were nearly identical to those with a mental illness.

## CANADA

**RED CROSS** The Canadian Red Cross formally apologized for the tainted blood scandal in which more than 1,000 Canadians were infected with HIV and up to 20,000 with hepatitis C, in the 1980s and early '90s. (They had received blood not screened by widely available measures.) In a plea bargain, the Red Cross agreed to a \$5,000 fine and to contribute \$1.5 million for research on to blood-borne disease and scholarships to victims of the scandal or family members. A judge must still decide whether to accept the deal. The former head of the blood transfusion system during that period **is facing criminal charges**, but his lawyer argued earlier this year he is too ill for trial.

**SEATS** Young buses, presumably young models forced to feed for themselves, attacked

**bikers and bush workers** in five separate incidents in B.C. and Alberta. The most serious, a black bear mauling and began biting the head and arms of 17-year-old Julia Graham while she was taking a tree survey in northern B.C. A co-worker accused off the bear with a shotgun blast.



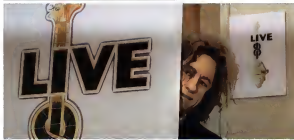
**ARAM** Former foreign affairs minister Rafi Aram offered an apology and a handshake to Maher Arar, saying **Canada should have acted more quickly** to get the Ottawa software engineer out of Syria, where he had been sent by U.S. officials. Appearing at the inquiry into the affair, Graham said he **hadn't** idea Arar was being **trapped** in Syria, even though the top foreign affairs official on the file testified earlier he was pretty sure that was going on.

**FISH** Federal Fisheries officials boarded a Portuguese trawler, the *Santa Mafalda*, as it entered Canadian waters, and charged its captain with illegal fishing two years ago.

The charges are a test of a new fisheries agreement Canada signed with the European Union and other nations just last month. Ottawa had been **trawling** the *Santa Mafalda*, warning far it to return.

**HAVE CRIME** Or house? RCMP in Richmond, B.C., are investigating both possibilities in the case of a 17-year-old Sikh boy who said he was beaten, robbed and **had his long hair cut** with an electric knife by a gang of young white toughs. Police said a similar case turned out false when it became clear the alleged victim just wanted short hair and was feeling culturally constrained. In this case, however, they said the boy's injuries are consistent with his story.

**SEX TRADE** Hey students, mostly native kids, are vulnerable on a variety of fronts. Still, Grunshaw elementary school principal Caroline Krasak checked Vancouver councilors when the said **plunges** **rowdily** come onto school property, sometimes into the schoolyard, trying to recruit girls in Grades 6 and 7. She removed contact not to open an unsupervised park nearby that could prove difficult to police.



**PEEK-A-BOB** He vowed never to repeat the physical Live Aid concert he emceed 20 years ago to help raise African hunger, but former **beatboxer** Rick Rubin could no longer ignore the world-shaking power of rock 'n' roll, or the emotions of his friend Bono. Goldberg assumed a series of live **trio** after **should**

concert on July 3, in London, Philadelphia, New York and **London**—Ottawa is also a possibility—in **advance** of the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the world's most **celebrated** **concert**. He said this time not to raise money but to get public pressure on the G8 to cancel Africa's debt, an idea whose **particular** is gathering as well.

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Mary Janigan | ON THE ISSUES



## INNOCENTS ABROAD

Canadian troops sit atop a powder keg as they try to bring stability to Afghanistan

**THERE IS SOMETHING** so improbable and quiescent about our burgeoning relationship with Afghanistan. That impoverished state, dogged over towering mountains, recently issued statistics for its "booming GDP"—although it modestly added that opium income would increase that number by 50 per cent. Its per capita income of US\$200 is among the lowest in the world. In diplomatic terms, its very existence is fragile. President Hamid Karzai presides anxiously in Kabul amid a countryside of fabled warlords, jealously guarding their turf.

It seems a peculiarly fascinating challenge for our first large-scale attempt to implement our new international policy statement's "3-D" approach to unstable nations. The third D is diplomacy, defence and development. In Afghanistan, this means that as Canadian forces shut down operations from Kabul to Kandahar in the south this fall, foreign efforts, defence and our foreign aid agencies will try to work more closely to maximize their effectiveness.

Even on paper, our ambitious mission to stabilize the Karzai regime, through a NATO-led military coalition and in partnership with other aid donors, is so daunting that it has already been the subject of a cloud-dense conference run by four academic groups in Waterloo, Ont. Afghanistan is now our largest aid recipient, more than \$616 million from 2001-2009, including government operational funds, drought relief and small loans for enterprise.

AFGHAN LIES this autumn, we will send a 250-member reconstruction team, in-

cluding army personnel, civilian police, diplomats and aid workers to renege Karzai's "to reinforce the authority of the Afghan government." In early 2006, another 1,000 troops will arrive to conduct security operations on that rebel-infested turf.

Nice work—if we can do it. So far, the record seems decidedly mixed. Colin Kenny, chairman of the Senate defence committee, returned last week from a visit finding with us our 700 troops in Kabul with serious doubts. Our troops had difficulty pinpointing the location of an ambassador's residence, the second-in-command had never been there. One of our aid workers barely survived a kidnapping attempt while Kenny was there. Our teachers gun training troops occasion themselves away from the populace in armed vehicles.

The military effort alone is enormous. We transport supplies from Canada to Dubai, load them onto smaller aircraft and then log four-and-a-half hours around Iran to Kabul. We keep 200 troops in Dubai. Of the 700 in Kabul, 14 assess the training of Afghan troops, a small group does intelligence and there's a 150-man reconnaissance squad group. The remainder, with the exception of the occasional phantom presence of our secretive JTF2 special forces, mostly manage and secure our camp. "I want the government to be clear about the objective and length of our commitment," Kenny says. "We need a test strategy."

So far, Ottawa talks vaguely about the mission taking "years." It is hard not to be concerned: innocents abroad, we are funding former workshops on gender issues in Kabul while our troops patrol a powder keg. But we must also hope the 3-D method curbs Marxist terrorist pressure on Karzai's regime. As we have learned to our sorrow, instability abroad has a way of coming home. ■

Mary Janigan is a political and policy writer, the principal at Janigan/Janigan Inc.

## Passages

**FEARED** Urinda Tokanka, 42, a Toronto interior designer, became the first Canadian woman to climb the highest peak on all seven continents after ascending the south face of Everest. She appears to have been our Ottawa teacher Peggy Foster, 45, who was on the same quest but was crippled by bad weather on Everest's north slope.

**DIED** A writer, conservationist, author and filmmaker, he was 61. As a member of the Alberta foothills he lived in his most life. **Andy Russell**, whose 14 books chronicled Canada's high country, died in a Peachtree Creek, Ala., nursing home. He was 89.

**DIED** In 23 years as an NHL broadcaster (1964-87), **John D'Alessio** was almost always called upon whenever there was a big game. Inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1993, D'Alessio died of leukemia and bone cancer in Toronto. He was 67.

**WON** She came to Canada from Russia, a shy 12-year-old speaking only a few words of English. Now 23, she rules the world. **Nastya Glushko**, an IT grad from Toronto's Ryerson University, is the new Miss Universe, after beating out a bevy of pageant-crazed Latin American finalists. She is the second Canadian to win the title, after **Karene Baldwin** in 1982.

**RECOVERED** Power Corp. founder **Paul Desmarais Sr.**, 78, one of Canada's most influential businessmen, was in hospital near Quebec City after what was described as "a mild cardiac stroke." He was reported in stable condition.

**HONOURED** A retired Royal Bank exec, **Colpender Hall Wright**, 83, has become the first community volunteer wherever he was posted. He was the Canadian Unity Council's inaugural Outstanding Canadian award.



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# EVER SLEAZER

Just as Justice John Gomery was winding down his inquiry, along came the Grewal scandal. Welcome to the political purgatory that is Ottawa, writes PAUL WELLS.

**THE PAUL MARTIN TEAM** spent a year and a half and \$60 million of taxpayer money trying to prove that the scandalous episode when political favours could be traded for Liberal party advantage was over. Then Tim Murphy was down for his ties with Gerrard Grewal.

Just as Justice John Gomery's commission of inquiry into the federal sponsorship program was winding down its public hearings in Montreal, behind new accusations of vote-buying and sleazy ethics were being leveled against Liberals in Ottawa. Gerrard Grewal, a B.C. Conservative MP, received long extracts from tape-recorded conversations on which Murphy, Prime Minister Paul Martin's chief of staff, and Health Minister Ujal Dosanjh seems to hint with no great delicacy that choice appointments visited Grewal and his wife, Nina, another Conservative MP, if they abstained or switched sides on the vote on the Liberals' budget.

The obstacle is the way of frank discussion for the three men are Criminal Code interdicted against offering rewards in exchange for co-operation from government officials.

The hurdle clearly preoccupied Dosanjh and Murphy, because they spent a lot of time on the tapes explaining that they can't be seen to be extending an offer. This came out to take much longer than if they had simply said, "We are not extending an offer."

At one point, for instance, Dosanjh pipes up with: "You have to be able to say that I did not make a deal. That's very important. That's why those kinds of deals are not rendered as feasible." The two Liberals discussed the propriety of rewards they cannot be seen to have offered Grewal and his wife, choice appointments, \$500,000, diplomatic posts. If this isn't clear enough, Dosanjh remarks Grewal that "if the chief of staff says that certain conduct ought to be rewarded in due time, that means a kept 99.9 per cent of the time."

"Which conduct? Apparently, the conduct that is involved under the kind of deal that is not made in the fashion they had to be



With no great delicacy, hints were made that good things awaited Grewal and his wife, Nina.

able to say they did not make this one. So much for putting ethical screens behind the government and getting on with the business of the nation. Further proof that for this one crossed Prime Minister,

trouble follows credible. And ask once Martin couldn't use the techniques his government had relied on to win in February 2006, on the heels of another general election. Prime Minister's daughter, sister, and the longest running spouse of a Liberal and trade-show sponsorship during the first Christmas year. Back then, Martin promptly cautioned

Liberals who had become mixed up in accusations of wrongdoing: "VIA Rail chairman Jean Pelletier, the Crown rail company's president, Marc LeBlanc, and an ambassador to Denmark Alfonso Gagliardi. Martin helped suppress their pride in how they would not indulge the mean arts of concealing or minimizing wrongdoing

now have to be able to say that I did not make a deal," Dosanjh stressed on the tapes.

"Isn't that the perfect opportunity to demonstrate that you're an agent of change?" David Hertz, one of Martin's most trusted advisers, asked an interviewer the days after Foster's suit was released. "Isn't this the perfect

kind of issue on which to say, 'Here is something that happened in a previous government—under a different administration—and as soon as it's come out, here's the actions I've taken' to me that is an agent of change."

When the clouds of allegation floated over Martin in the whole business was the behaviour of his adversaries. It is hard to imagine how the Conservative party could have more completely heaped the rail of the tapes. Grewal and the Conservative communications office hung onto them for 13 days after Grewal first proclaimed their existence, keeping them not only from reporters' scrutiny but from the RCMP. The Conservatives' explanation for the delay was that the tapes suffered from unspecified technical issues and that many of the conversations, involving Grewal, Dosanjh and another Liberal, took place in French. None of this explained why the Conservatives would withhold purported evidence of wrongdoing from the police for so long.

Almost inevitably, the Liberals spread that the reason for the delay was to edit out passages that would embarrass the Conservatives and to insert passages that could harm the Liberals. Technicians popped up here and there to say the tapes contained the stilted clichés of unscripted tape splicing. Practically, one might agree: there is no way an amateur splicer could have constructed the ease of transcoding the tapes just as the mouth of Murphy and Dosanjh. The tapes may reflect, for the very good reason of their coming alive, a faithful record of a concerted Liberal effort to sway Gomery's allegations. But the delay in releasing the

tapes—and the nagging question of just how noble Greer's motives were in negotiating his party allegiance for most of a well-guaranteed Conservative would bear their share of public suspicion.

For any Canadian voter trying to choose a prospective government, it comes down to a dispiriting choice between possible bribery and possible fraud. No wonder the NDP was the only national party to have gained voters' trust since last year, in an infamous poll for the CBC. And no wonder respect for all politicians has taken a beating, with 45 per cent saying they had little or no trust in the nation's political leaders.

Again, that's not the way it was supposed to work out when Martin tasked Justice Gomery to get to the bottom of the sponsorship scandal. As a mechanism for clearing the air, the Gomery public hearings have proved inconclusive. There was one moment when it seemed the earth had opened under the Liberals' feet and would simply swallow the Martin government along with it. That was the day in April when Gomery lifted a brief publication ban on testimony from the colourful Liberal huggam Jean Trudelle: Trudelle full of cash changing hands in Italian restaurants, Jackknives, study due dates—it confused many Canadians' worst fears about what had been going on under the name of promoting national unity.

The resulting political crisis unfolded: Stephen Harper's determination to bring the Martin government down; the scandal, and it fed directly to Martin's dramatic televised plea for unity to let Gomery complete his hearings and deliver a report, expected in December. Amazingly, Martin's gambit worked with the help of independent ex-Conservative Chuck Cadman and newly Liberal ex-Conservative Belinda Stronach, the Liberals and NDP managed to defeat the combined votes of the Bloc and Conservative coalition to survive a budget vote. Ottawa is not a dramatic city for political predictions these days, but it seems safe to say Martin has won his coalition, at least until autumn.

Meanwhile, though, back at the Gomery hearings, something surprising was happening: not much. The final testimony was followed by a succession of colourful characters, including former Paul Coffin with his elaborate system of duplicated or inverted payments (last week he pleaded guilty to 15 counts of fraud) and graphic designer Jacques Cormier, when others



#### BY THE NUMBERS

After this recent period of intense activity in Ottawa, what do Canadians think of the country's political situation? The results of the latest Maclean's/Reger's Media poll.

**Are you/you're disappointed that there will not be a spring election?**

Relieved	59%
Disappointed	30
Don't know/refused	23

**Do you think the opposition parties should again attempt to bring down the government, or wait to see what comes out of the Gomery inquiry?**

Wait	75%
Attempt another vote	22
Don't know/refused	34

**Do you believe Prime Minister Paul Martin will keep his promise to call an election after the Gomery inquiry is completed?**

Yes	55%
No	29
Don't know/refused	34

**Which of the following politicians has the most work ahead of them to improve their public image?**

Paul Martin	31%
Stephen Harper	28
Belinda Stronach	14
Jack Layton	4
Prime Minister	2
Don't know/refused/other	20

**How has Belinda Stronach's decision to cross over to the Liberals affected her chances of ever becoming prime minister?**

Helped	38%
Hurt	33
No impact	33
Don't remember	16

Source: Maclean's Inc., Reger's Media Ltd.  
Margin of error: ±3.5%

needed as the most reliable source for large amounts of cash but who offered a subjective memory that failed him whenever recollection might prove embarrassing.

It was kind, stiff, day after day, but it seems to have had no durable effect on Liberal or Conservative fortunes. Probably the Gomery inquiry's last opportunity, short of a written report from Gomery himself, to shake public opinion came when the commissioner's own auditor from Kroll Langdon Avey revealed the results of their inquiry into the Adcochem money trail. The auditor's billing was apocalyptic. The Sun newspaper chain said the Kroll audit was "expected to shake the foundations" of Gomery's inquiry and "expected to make most wires draw any other testimony before Gomery."

But much like the current generation of political leaders, the Kroll audit failed to meet expectations. The auditor found that while the firm spent \$3.32 million on sponsorship-related activities over a decade, the largest firms donated only \$768,536 to the Liberal party in above-board donations, and only \$1.76 million in secret under-the-table cash—0.5% of Smith's treasury, which the auditor could not verify, was true. Gomery said he had no way of knowing whether the money Bessie spent had actually made it into Liberal coffers. As strolling goats go, the Kroll audit lacked some zip.

The upshot of all this has been a relative stability in the polls that make frustration just about every party except, arguably, the Bloc. A Demos Research poll at the end of May had the Liberals with a 36 per cent to 27 per cent lead over the Conservatives—enough to deny the Liberals a majority and the Conservatives any real shot at replacing them in Canada's next government. The NDP may rise in public esteem but shows no sustained bounce in voting intentions.

Shelia Fraser's swift knocked the Martin Liberals from majority territory into minority territory. Nothing more than his subconsciously changed that state of affairs. Paul Martin has become a figure of constant frustration, not only for Liberals who thought he might eventually amount to something, but for political opponents who had lately dared hope he might be easy to challenge. Almost before he had truly begun to govern, the Fraser audit burned Martin into a political purgatory. His opponents, and much of Canada's political culture, remain trapped there with him. There is no exit in sight. ☐

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# THE SHOW'S OVER

But why did we need a sponsorship program in the first place, asks BENOIT AUBIN?

IN THE FINAL DAYS of its public hearings phase, Justice John Gossery's inquiry felt like a popular soap that had been running for too long. The shock and outrage initially triggered by revelations of massive government and political fire-draining related to the federal Liberals' sponsorship program had worn off somewhat. So, in the wayward descent in that last stretch—mismanaging their clients' optics, or even just disbelieving—Lombard was hyped, drawing when a subtle change in pace and tone brought us back to reality. What's up? "Not much, just a rift from Canada," a colleague said. The commission had just switched to English, there was some backhanded but no skin in his remark. One member of the Gossery commission was that most participants—be they named Gossery, Poirer, Cournoyer, Mitchell or Yarek—kept stuffing from French to English without seeming to even notice it. The only true proceedings were concerned exclusively in English was when the inquiry accommodated unilingual lawyers or witnesses from... well, from Canada.

That's when the thought struck me: maybe the Christian Liberals had the whole thing as a backdrop when they spent \$332 million to tell Quebecers on Canada through a "we Bilibilly" program in the province. Maybe that money would have been better spent explaining something to the rest of Canada that Quebec is just a majority—accuse and vocal, for sure, but insecure and not primarily hostile. Perhaps, as that Gossery episode suggested, it's the Canadians who need the meditation.

The judge will now get ready to write his assessment of the sponsorship mess, with a preliminary report due in early November. His inquiry was a complicated business to follow, because it was chasing many rabbits around. It explored the workings of the sponsorship program, and then dove into the scandal within over \$100 million in fake in-



vests, biased commissions, cash transfers, coded books and outright swindling. Then a crisis arose and outrage exploded. Then a crisis arose and outrage exploded. Then a crisis arose and outrage exploded.

But as Gossery now prepares to issue the commission's report, the federal government has been told for the last three months or so, such questions should be raised. "Why did we

need a sponsorship program? Could it have worked, had it been run properly? What message will voters receive? And what's coming next? After all, the Liberal brand is toast in Quebec, while the political class and the political process as a whole are equally discredited. And Quebec is a deeply insecure, not only were they ripped off like all other Canadians, they were made fools of. All because of a sponsorship program that could never have succeeded because it broke a cardinal rule of marketing, says Jean Jacques Séthé, a Montreal strategy consultant. "You can't save an ailing brand by just advertising. You must fix it first, and then advertise something new and improved." Sure,

the viability campaign's idea, as former prime minister Jean Chrétien told Gossery, was to offer an extensive propaganda effort led by Quebec separatists. And true, the NDP's victory in the last election, calling everything "national" and playing flags everywhere. But declaring it "war" as top sponsorship lieutenant Chuck Gossard did in the inquiry? Well, right. Hop on that warpath and imagine on that rope message that it should use you more.

But what made the minority survive? And what made Canada an ailing brand? The

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sponsorship program began after the Liberals' defeat in the October 1995 referendum. That vote fed off the turbulence that followed the 1990 collapse of the Meech Lake accord that would have recognized Quebec as a distinct society (Hén's case many). Chrétien, who was among the leaders of the onslaught against Brian Mulroney's attempt at constitutional reform, was also the one who launched the sponsorship program to try to clean up the mess afterwards.

"In that March period, opinion polls indicated support for separation were very volatile," says Jean-Henri Goss, a political science at the Université de Sherbrooke. "They were at their lowest point when March looked like

it could succeed, and in their highest just after the collapse." In other words, the threat of separation was a reactive process. Make a symbolic gesture, call Quebec a distinct society within Canada, and you probably won't need a sponsorship program the years down the road. Besides which, a full-on Meech Lake campaign doesn't really resonate in Quebec. As Séthé concludes, "They were showing at the wrong dock. Quebecers find their identity locally—the emotional bond is here." They have different reasons to want to stay in Canada than are just ideological, he says, but not as emotional as racism. That's what was there.

If most Quebecers had been half-believing separatists, chances are they'd be gone by now. Had they been Canadian in mind, in action, they would have blended in. So, maybe they're distinct, after all, but Canadian nonetheless? A federal "visibility" campaign was not going to drive them to change their mind about what they are, and to large a deeper bond of identity with a country that does not always understand their language. But Canada's refusal to recognize them is merely distinct within Confederation nearly drive them out.

And now? "The scandal has no doubt strengthened many separatist in this province," says Yves Dupuis, a senior marketing man who has been a political organizer for such leaders as René Lévesque and New Brunswick's Richard Hatfield. "But it has probably not created many new ones in the province." Still, there has been intense damage. The Liberal Party of Canada has been one of the few national institutions within which French and English speaking Canadians have worked together since before Confederation was hammered out in 1867. As the Gossery inquiry, though, it revealed itself as a purely partisan device, not a defense, mostly to protect and possibly discredited—after all, a painful episode in which one group of French Canadians turned it into a weapon against another group of French Canadians. All in the name of national unity—declaring war on the "separatist threat" instead of looking for greater accommodation with the largest minority in the land.

Which didn't could describe Chrétien's reign in prime minister? He who won the word "coup" a storm? What goes around, comes around? Or, perhaps, those children always coming home to roost.

# TIME FOR HEALING

A town vows to not forget four murdered Mounties. BRIAN BERGMAN reports.

**FOR MAYERTHORPE RCMP Const. Joe Sangster, emotions are still running high.** It's been three months since Sangster's four friends and colleagues—Peter Schumann, 25, Anthony Gordon, 28, Brock Myers, 29, and Leo Johnston, 32—were brutally murdered by rival gangs in James Rossie before the gunman killed himself. Life has slowly returned to normal in the small coastal Alberta town, says Sangster, or at least as close to normal as it possibly can. But a sense of loss is never far from mind. "When it's a nice sunny day and work

is going well," he says, "you might kind of forget them for a little while. But then all of sudden—boom! There, you think, 'Wow they were still here with me right now!'"

Sangster is sitting in what is known as "the soft room" at the Mayerthorpe RCMP detachment, the place where victims of crime and their families normally come to be comforted. Beside him is Cpl. Jim Martin. Both men, dressed in T-shirts and shorts, are off-duty this warm spring day. They are trying to explain to a visitor how one person ahead of a tragedy that touched a nation—and shook these small police fraternities to its core. "I think it's about letting go, but not forgetting," says Sangster. "Have to move on for my family and my community, because they need us to work. So we have to get our heads straight and get going again."

Martin nods in agreement. The first weeks after the shootings, he says, "were pretty much a haze." Detachment members were granted leave to spend time with their families and those of the fallen officers. "That's where almost all our energies went," says Martin. "Just being around each other, supporting each other." Even after returning to work, officers tended to pair up on patrol more than they used to—not for security reasons, but for comfort. "We'd talk," explains Martin. "That's how we'd get through it. Even if we weren't talking about what happened that day, it would be about our lives in general." Sangster is now more cautious. "For myself," he says, "I was just in mourning and I needed to be around the guys."

In an 11-member detachment, it is a farming community of just 1,600 people, officers are even more tightly knit than on an

urban force. When they aren't patrolling, they golf or card together, or hang out at each other's homes. So whether at work or at play, they now get constant reminders of what once was. "All four of those guys were my friends," says Sangster. "I'd back them



At a memorial service in Mayerthorpe, Grade 1 students look at a picture of Gordon.

any day and they'd do the same for me. They will never be replaced. Never."

**AS NEWS TRICKLED** out on March 3 that something was terribly amiss on James Rossie's farm, just northeast of Mayerthorpe, reporters flocked into the town from across the country. By mid-afternoon, police confirmed that four Mounties—three from the Mayerthorpe detachment and a fourth from neighbouring Whitewater—had been shot and killed while making out a mortgage deal on Rossie's property. RCMP were to the farm the previous day to assist with the repossession of a 2005 Ford pickup Rossie had leased from an Edmonton company, only to discover stolen auto parts and 20

more marijuana plants. Rossie, who had fled the scene, somehow managed to sneak back onto the farm and ambush the young officers, using a high-powered rifle-fire rifle.

The media frenzy only manifested as details emerged about the gunman. Rossie, 46, a well-known cop-hater, had run afoul of the law for more than three decades. Charges against him included unlawful confinement, aggravated assault, assault with a weapon, obstruction of justice and a variety of firearms offences. Yet the only serious jail time he did was 2½ years for repeatedly sexually assaulting a young boy. Rossie received mandatory parole in 1992, after serving two-thirds of his sentence.

Reporters hung around Mayerthorpe for the better part of a week, until the March 10 national memorial service for the fallen RCMP officer in Edmonton finally drove them away. While many reporters praise the professionalism and politeness of the journalists, they were glad to see the back of them. "It was a bit of relief," says Mayerthorpe Mayor Albert Schmitt. "The feeling was, 'Yes, you've been here and we've talked to you. But we'd like to start healing ourselves a bit.'"

Residents reached out to each other in quiet conversations, away from the prying eyes and ears of reporters. "You could talk to your neighbour, or virtually anyone in town, without feeling like you were intruding," says Schmitt. "It was just people leaning on each other, venting their feelings." There was some anger, he adds, but it was hard to know where to direct it. "People would say, 'Why did this happen?' 'Who are we blaming?' But at this point, the only person you could be mad at was James Rossie and he was dead."

**ALMOST FROM** the moment the shocking news broke in, there was a desperate desire among many Mayerthorpe residents to do something, anything, to respond. By 9 a.m., March 4, a group spearheaded by Charlotte Arthur, who works for an accounting firm on the town's main street,



Schneider and Schmitt, along with Martin, view a picture of

and Collette McKillop, who owns a nearby insurance business, had launched a red-and-white ribbon campaign to honour the dead. There were large ones for businesses to hang on their windows and doors and small ones for residents to wear on their lapels. The ribbons were free, but many people wanted to make spontaneous donations, including teachers and business men who wanted off Highway 43 to pay their respects.

Three months and thousands of ribbons

later, the campaign continues. "I never thought it would keep going like this," says Arthur, at the owner's cup of coffee at the Laramie Restaurant on main street. "It's amazing." For Arthur, who went to school with Rossie ("he was a quiet guy," she recalls), the ribbon drive has been a way to forge something positive out of a tragedy that will forever be shaken when she discusses it. "What a blow," she says. "It just makes me sick to this day to think of the pain he's caused."

Within days of the murders, there was much talk around town about the need to create a permanent memorial to the slain officers. Margaret Thibault, who worked closely with all four constables as coordinator of victim services for the RCMP detachments in Mayerthorpe and Whitewater, took on the cause. Thibault now heads a committee that will spend the next two years trying to raise at least \$500,000 to develop a memorial site. While it will very much aid the planning stages, Thibault envisions a park and garden with statues of each of the murdered policemen and benches where visitors can sit and reflect. "We want to do something to show this was not us," says Thibault. "This was the work of one person who happened to live in our community."

Mayerthorpe's young people also stepped up to the plate. Hayley Martin, 26, and Megan Sangster, also 26, daughters of Jim Martin and Joe Sangster, came up with the idea of asking every student across Canada to donate a stone towards the RCMP memorial. Together with Megan's sister, Laura, 22, and two local high school students, Kate Macrae and Katherine Liskman, they launched the Kids 4 Cops campaign which, so far, has raised nearly \$4,000. "We really loved them and missed them so we wanted to do something," says Martin, who admits the shootings have made her a little more nervous whenever Dad goes off to work. Hayley says she's also come to realize how dangerous, yet important, police work can be. "We just want a place," she says, "where people can come and relax and be proud of Leo, Tony, Brock and Peter."

Even as they work to honour the slain officers, Mayerthorpe residents make a point of distinguishing between the men who committed the murders and members of the gangs in which they were involved. Rossie's motives are debated around Mayerthorpe, Whitewater and the surrounding areas. "We protect our own," says McKillop, who also serves as head of the Mayerthorpe & District Chapter of Corrections. "Just because they are relatives, the community is not going to hold that against them, ever." George Rossie, an ex-soldier contractor from Whitewater, confirms that his neighbours and co-workers sided with him after the shootings. "They realized this had nothing to do with us," says George, who, like many other family members, had

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been charged from his younger brother for years. "It was just a sick little man who did a sick, awful deed."

Like so many others in the area, George Orsini had brother's murderings shows how the country's justice system sometimes fails to protect the public. "It should have been deemed a dangerous offender and locked away years ago," he says. He voices another often-voiced concern: given the run-ins James had with the police, and the crash landed for all authority figures, why did the RCMP leave four officers alone on his brother's farm while James was still unaccounted for? "What were they thinking?" he says. "That was just crazy."

Mayenhorpe insists he's not a moralist to the four innocent

force, more than half of that in Alberta, Kintoreingham has been sharply critical of police planning and supervision March 3. Given Rosale's reputation, he says, the RCMP should have either known where Rosale was before sending officers onto the farm or brought in a tactical unit to secure the perimeter of the area they were working in. "And what the heck is Sweeney doing commenting on this before the investigation is complete?" asks Kintoreingham. "He's not a disinterested party. He's in charge of RCMP resources in Alberta and this happened on his watch. But he's prejudged everything."

Back in Mayenhorpe, most people seem concerned to let the RCMP investigation proceed speedily—and, for the time being, to give justice the benefit of the doubt. But there are nagging questions some fear will never be resolved. Mayenhorpe's fire chief, Randy Schneider, tells himself "How did Rosale get back on the property and why would he do that?" Xanadu's estimate for the same, they don't return to it. What was he protecting? There wasn't anything there that would have put him away for life. Why would he come back and ambush these guys? Schneider's hands thrust the air as he continues. "If there's absolute physical evidence to determine how he got back there, that's one thing. But the best investigation in the world is never going to answer what was going through his mind. No one is ever going to know—and that's the frustrating part." Mayenhorpe may be looking, but the sound remains gnawing.

**THE RCMP** remain tight-lipped about the events of March 3 pending an internal review led by Chief Supt. Al MacLennan of British Columbia. He is overseeing both a criminal investigation into what exactly happened inside that storage shed as well as a report focusing on RCMP operations leading up to and including the shootings. In late April, Alberta's top Morahan told reporters he believes the review will show police acted with due diligence. "I'm quite confident," said Assistant Commissioner Bill Sweeney, "we will come to a conclusion that for an operation such as this, the members were properly trained, properly equipped, properly instructed and were taking precautions."

Clyde Kintoreingham was astonished when he heard of Sweeney's statement. A retired RCMP superintendent with 37 years on the

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# 'NON' AND THEN 'NEE'

ROBERT MASON LEE on the looming battle for the heart of Europe

**THE HEADLINE IN LES ECHOES**, the Paris daily business newspaper, said it all. "Réflecteur à short" (A political leader from Helsinki to Madrid were still rocking last week from the decisive rejection of a European constitution by French voters, the coupe de week to the creation of a "United States of Europe" for all citizens and purposes delivered three days later by voters in the Netherlands, who demonstrated even greater doubts for the creation of a European superstate. As "Nee" campaigners celebrated their victory by paying champagne toasts and waving red banners at the Bastille, symbol of French/Parisian

great uprising, the refusal of the people to be led deeper into an European confederacy was seen as a modern-day rebellion against the class. "In 1789 the revolutionaries freed the prisoners and frightened the king," said Paris lefties. *Alfred Manigault*. "This is the same thing—yet another dance between the leading and the people."

The back-to-back referendum issues almost certainly spell the end of the EU constitution, an unimpaired 67/73 works of legislation that would have established new powers for the European Parliament and created an elected, fixed-term European president and foreign minister. It was the first setback in nearly 50 years of unbroken European expansion and integration, follow to the Franco-German engine at its core, and the first time that the European Union had been snubbed by France and the Netherlands—two of its founding members.

Although the upset has left Europe in disarray, it is not yet a full-fledged crisis. The EU will continue to function under the 2001 Treaty of Nice, designed for 15 then member states. However, there now appears as way forward for the newest, expanded EU membership of 25 countries to manage its affairs. And plans for further expansion by eventually welcoming Turkey into Europe—as the first EU member to be exactly Muslim—could be in jeopardy. There is simply no Plan B, a fact that former French president and ex-chief of the treaty Valéry Giscard d'Estaing underscored during the referendum campaign by holding up a pink balloon marked "Plan B"—then popping it with a pin.

More worrisome still, the political citizenry exposes two deep divisions in Europe. The first is the so-called "democratic deficit" between government and the governed: the lack of political will to address issues of concern to the masses, such as the economy and immigration. The second is the divide between "Old" Europe and "New," or between the highly regulated, protectionist, yet flourishing economies of Western Europe, and the "Anglo-Saxon" model of liberalised trade, favoured by Britain and

and is expected to be out of office by the autumn, swept away by the free-market-oriented Angela Merkel, leader of the opposition Christian Democrats.

Blair had hoped to leave behind legacy from his third term in office by finally resolving Britain's historical ambivalence toward Europe, in part through a referendum on the EU constitution which will now almost certainly never happen. Instead, he is presented with an even greater opportunity—reaching Europe's ambivalence about itself. Like a latter-day Margaret Thatcher, Blair will attempt to unite an EU populace of 454 million by preaching the gospel of liberalised trade. Interrupted during a British holiday to continue on the mission, he said: "The question that is being debated by the people of Europe is how do you, in this era of globalisation, make our economies strong and competitive?"

The question is also how to make governments more responsive to the people. In France, as in the Netherlands, virtually the entire political establishment, the media, and its artists were in favour of the proposed treaty—in Paris the referendum passed with a two-thirds majority. Meanwhile, the bulk of ordinary citizens—what the French call *la France profonde*—were opposed. Norde majority of French voters, a bigger and more powerful Europe raised fears of being led into the British economic model of reduced subsidies, longer working hours, and greater competition. Although bedeviled by a sluggish economy and unemployment rates that have hovered around 10 per cent for the past 15 years, they were unwilling to make away their cherished way of life for a better economic performance.

In the Netherlands, meanwhile, the "Nee" campaign relied on fears of increased immigration, militant Muslim terrorism, and

They cheered, even though the status quo is a sluggish economy and high unemployment.



being drowned in a tsunami of European competition, as well as the possibility of the country's liberal social policies being threatened. Such concerns have already led to an exodus from the Netherlands; last year, 49,000 mostly middle-class Dutch emigrated to places such as Canada and New Zealand, the highest number since 1954.

Campaigning against the treaty, right-wing MP Geert Wilders was greeted like a rock star whenever he arrived, unannounced and in a half-topped limousine, at anti-consumption rallies. Wilders has lived for the past seven months in a cell in a high-security prison following death threats against him from Islamic groups, and his caution would appear warranted—his ideological predecessor, gay anti-immigration politician Pim Fortuyn, was assassinated three years ago. "We are handing over too many sovereign powers to the other Brussels," he said. "We are giving up too many rights, in particular the right to set our own immigration policy."

Constitutional tinkering as a defence last year, as Canadians with memories of the Meech Lake and Charlottetown accords can attest. The proposed European constitution struck a fine balance between the interests of the EU's large founding member states and its weaker, newer arrivals. It is doubtful that Blair will accept a cherry-pick over his proposals and put the constitution to another vote, unlikely as this exercise would be to produce the necessary unanimity. More probably, he has the luxury of allowing time to change the political landscape. By 2007, both France and Germany are expected to have governments more sympathetic to the British cause, and Blair would still have up to three years remaining in office. That would be time enough to launch another constitutional drive. In the meanwhile, a disconcerted electorate has firmly applied the brakes to further European expansion. ■



Interview | KEITH SPICER

## 'THERE'S AN EERIE ECHO OF THE FAILURE OF MEECH LAKE'

**IN FRANCE** and Holland last week, voters rejected a new European Union constitution, sending an angry message to their politicians and blocking the next stage of European integration. Among Canadians with a nostalgia for the former chairman of the CRTC, Spicer, who lives in Paris, is director of the Institute for Media, Peace and Security, a branch of the UN's University for Peace. In 1990-91, he headed the Clinton-Pearson on Canada's Future study that led to the collapse of the Meech Lake constitutional sound.

**What's the mood in Europe following the referendum in France and Holland?**  
It's like an earthquake. The politicians are the Earth's crust and the people are the

tectonic plates. We have incredible anger at the elite here. There's an eerie echo of the failure of the Meech Lake accord on our own constitution.

### Where do you see the parallels?

Some in Meech Lake, the politicians here put legislation before a shared doom. In both cases, there were secret meetings of leaders, which angered the people. Then came massive disavowal of elites—the politicians, the press, experts of all kinds.

### What's at the root of French discontent over EU expansion and integration?

Unemployment has been a cancer here for decades. It's been over 10 per cent for years. For younger people, it really seems hopeless, so there's great anger at President Jacques Chirac over the lack of jobs. A number of high-profile cases have seen factories moving to Eastern Europe.

### Can't they argue that a more dynamic Europe will help the French economy?

A major failure of China and the entire right is general is that they didn't dare sell Europe on its free-market vitality. They prefer to what I call neo-Marxist fear-of-business is happy with something, there must be something wrong with it. Many people say, "Well, we have to start with some government jobs." It's astounding: people actually think that jobs are created by the state. One problem is that French politics is packed with civil servants. They haven't the slightest idea of how a free-market economy works. They couldn't run a newspaper kiosk.

### What about Holland?

Once again, a strongly anti-elite vote. And there is specific Dutch objection that their contributions per capita to the European Union are the highest. However, there is not the same unemployment problem. In fact, Holland has found a balance between economic stimulus and social protection.

### Why feel uneasy about the EU itself?

It's a matter of identity and multiculturalism. Traditional Dutch are feeling overwhelped by immigration, particularly Muslim transmigration. Although Holland is renowned for its tolerance, it is not limitless.

### Can the EU win back the people's favour?

The EU is disconnected from people. I've never heard anyone from those massive glass buildings in Brussels get out and sell the EU. Very few people could name their European member of parliament. There's nobody selling the dream. **—JANIS AXTELL**

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## NOW COMES BLAME-GATE

Here's a scandal: old Nixon hands, clawing at now-revealed Deep Throat

IT'S A FUNNY THING about history: Just when you think the accumulation of facts has finally reached critical mass, and the story of our times will settle neatly into a coherent narrative, along come old controversies to stir matters up again. Surely by now we can agree that America's Vietnam adventure was a colossal mistake, that thousands died needlessly in an unwinnable war? Apparently not, as the last U.S. presidential election so vibrantly proved. The candidacy of John Kerry, a decorated war hero, brought old soldiers out to fight wars, to question Kerry's heroism and patriotism and even to suggest, one more time, that

a protest paraded the U.S. government had lost its own heroic victory.

And now comes Watergate, and here we go again.

"It's the guy they used to call Deep Throat," Mark Felt said, as quoted in *Winter* last, and aging secretsmiths rubbed in their battle stations. This was, undeniably, a major moment in the annals of U.S. politics and journalism. After three decades of obsessive speculation, we finally know the identity of the shadowy, chain-smoking figure (Hal Hollbrook in the movie) who talked to the Washington Post's Bob Woodward in a dark parking garage, in meetings arranged after the reporter issued an angry flourish on his balcony or Deep Throat told clock hands down on Woodward's morning paper. Here was the man—the number 2 guy at the FBI, the man out—who told Woodward to “fol low the money,” starting with the financing of the burglars who broke into Democratic National Committee offices at the Watergate complex that June night in 1972.

Felt is 91 now, slightly stooped, and suffering the after-effects of a stroke. His release spoke for him when the venerable press hounds descended on his California doozy. Grandson Nick Jones said the family he loves Felt is a “great American hero who went well above and beyond the call of duty at much risk to himself to save his country from a horrible injustice.” And then he added, as if teasing the coming storm: “We all sincerely hope the country will see him this way as well.”

Which doesn't seem too much to ask. Because, with Felt's invaluable assistance, the stunts by Woodward and Carl Bernstein led to congressional investigations, an



The FBI's Felt (here in 1978) was no saint

impeachment inquiry and, ultimately, to the resignation of the seemingly corrupt Richard Nixon. This was, you'd think we'd agree by now, a very good thing.

But no, apparently not. The day the story broke last week the old Nixon hands came charging to the microphones. Pat Buchanan, the former *Wall Street Journal* speechwriter, said that “folks behaved atrociously—I'm unable to see the nobility of the enterprise.” G. Gordon Liddy, the dirty trickster who engineered the Watergate break, said Felt had “violated the ethics of the law enforcement profession.” And Chuck Colson, Nixon's special counsel, opined, “He had the trust of America's leaders, and so I think that betrayed that trust is hard for me to forgive.”

Oh yes, New America is famously a land of second chances, and many of the president's men have done very well for themselves. Buchanan is a noted conservative commentator. Liddy, who spent nearly five years in prison, hosts a radio talk show. Colson, who did seven months' time, is an evangelical Christian working with inmates. Good for them. But didn't his tone moral outrage over Felt's methods? Hilarious stuff.

No, Mark Felt was no saint. Nixon had passed him over for the FBI's top job, so his motivation could have been purely personal. In 1980, he was convicted of approving bribes to the leaders of people associated with the radical Weather Underground (he was later pardoned by Ronald Reagan). Fick, thanks to a first editor, his close-and-digger character was named after a punk flick. But then, who wants a perfect hero?

Of course, the self-serving condemnations from the Nixon crowd would be less troubling if their strategic choices weren't heard in today's White House. Back in the day, the Nixonians performed the fine art of media-basking: all this Watergate nonsense was nothing but a gross conspiracy. George W. Bush's team knows the game. Reports of abuse against Muslim detainees? Just a few bad apples and media hype. Anti-American rage in the Arab world? Blame that eternally sourced Newswatch story about U.S. interrogators beating a Koran down the toilet. There's no doubt the magazine made a huge mistake (*SN* disclosure: I'm a former Newswatch writer), but does anyone seriously think it's done more to offend Muslims than the U.S. government?

We all live in a post-Watergate world. People distrust this government, they distrust the media. They've been given ample cause by both institutions. But before we rush out to revile history—before we blame white blowers and journalists' use of anonymous sources—let's recall the most celebrated white blowers and anonymous sources of all. Because Deep Throat, no matter what any one says, was an American hero. **D**

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With the help of our fitness expert, dietitian and physician, Nankores Keta, Chris Ginnor and Mitchell Cohen will work toward achieving their goals. Watch for their progress report over the next few months. Here are their current vitals:

## PROFILE No. 1

**Name:** Nankores Keta  
**Occupation:** Program Coordinator  
**Age:** 38  
**Home:** Montreal  
**Height:** 5'3"  
**Weight:** 173 lbs  
**Diet:** Rarely eats out, won't eat "factory-prepared" food.  
**Health status:** Ex-smoker with type 2 diabetes. Blood pressure and cholesterol levels healthy.  
**Physical activity:** Attends Aquatic classes several times a week. Walks most places. Uses a stationary bicycle regularly.  
**Family history:** Mother has type 2 diabetes; four sisters currently overweight.  
**Weight loss goal:** 52 lbs.



## PROFILE No. 2

**Name:** Chris Ginnor  
**Occupation:** Author, science reporter and doctoral candidate  
**Age:** 50  
**Home:** Edmonton  
**Height:** 6'2"  
**Weight:** 302 lbs  
**Diet:** Eats healthy foods, but sometimes overeats.  
**Health status:** Heart murmur; hospitalized three times for treatment of irregular heartbeat. Blood pressure normal. Has never smoked.  
**Physical activity:** Enjoys walking, but Edmonton winters present a challenge.  
**Family history:** Type 2 diabetes and obesity in both sides of family.  
**Weight loss goal:** 50 lbs.



## PROFILE No. 3

**Name:** Mitchell Cohen  
**Occupation:** President, real estate, office furniture dealership  
**Age:** 45  
**Home:** Toronto  
**Height:** 5'9"  
**Weight:** 238 lbs  
**Diet:** Favours low-fat choices, but often has fast food at lunch. Frequently dines out with clients, which can lead to eating large portions of rich foods.  
**Health status:** Blood pressure and cholesterol levels normal. Ex-smoker.  
**Physical activity:** Enjoys walking, but job leaves him depleted and most of the time.  
**Family history:** Obese father had congestive heart failure and died of diabetes complications at 64; many first-degree relatives are obese.  
**Weight loss goal:** 40 lbs. ■



In September, we will revisit Nankores, Chris and Mitchell on these pages, detailing their progress. Check back to see how they've fared on their personal journeys to wellness.

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# ALBERTA IS ABOUT TO GET WILDLY RICH AND POWERFUL.

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO CANADA?

The demand to spread the wealth is sure to grow, writes STEVE MAICH

AT SUNCOR ENERGY'S Millennium oil sands project, just north of Fort McMurray, Alta., the unmistakable odour of black gold drifts up from the ground and hangs thick in the air. Everywhere around you, water pooled in footprints, the rain and potholes carries the telltale rainbow sheen of oil. "The smell of economic progress," jokes Fred Bellows, a spokesman for Suncor, playing host on a damp spring afternoon. But it's much more than that. It's the smell of raw power—the kind that comes from having plenty of what the rest of the world can't live without. It's the smell of a resource locked in the ground for

millions of years and which now has the potential to shape the future of a nation, for better or for worse.

Suncor's extraction plant on the bank of the Athabasca River looks like a science-fiction movie set—hundreds of kilometres of steel pipe twisted into impenetrable labyrinths around building and aerial buildings, storage tanks and smokestacks. The whole scene is bathed in a constant haze of steam and exhaust. Together each plant is now operating within an hour's drive of here, and several more are scheduled to commence operations over the next few years, all to exploit what may be the biggest petroleum deposit anywhere on the world, a sea of oil-encrusted soil covering an area the size of New Brunswick.

Already, one million barrels of petroleum a day are being spun out of the road and pumped south, and that number is projected to triple within the next decade. Dur-

ing that time, the oil sands will generate about 100,000 new jobs and billions of dollars in royalties and taxes to various levels of government, not to mention billions more in dividend checks to investors. But the significance of the oil sands beyond Canada's borders may be even greater.

Energy has become a central obsession of international politics in recent years, as exploding economic growth in Asia and America's ongoing love affair with gas-guzzling vehicles have accelerated the drain on world petroleum reserves. Terrorism, trade, the war in Iraq, a clear diplomacy—all of it, on some level, is related to the international preoccupation with energy, and access to affordable oil. So if Canada is to play a more significant global role in the years ahead, experts agree it will be due to the roiling, doughy black soil in northern Alberta, and the rest of the world's keen desire to share it. "The oil sands give Canada one of the



single greatest advantage of any state in the Western world," says Paul Charbon, a University of Calgary historian who recently published a book called *Developing Alberta's Oil Sands*. "It gives Canada the ability to supply all of North America for the next 50 years without reaching a drop of imported oil." It is, in short, an economic engine and political lever that any nation would desperately love to have.

But rich indeed it can be mixed blessings—that opportunity comes with a host of potentially poisonous and divisive questions about how best to manage the windfall. Amid Canada's tangle of regional rivalries, three dominant political cultures have emerged—western conservatives, eastern liberals and Quebec nationalists—each with its own strictly different priorities and visions for the country. While attention has traditionally focused on feelings of alienation in Quebec, the sense of historical grievance and isolation is just as deep in Alberta, where most believe Ottawa has long pondered to the economic interests of eastern elites at the expense of the West. Even the cultural symbols seem irreconcilable: it's the clash between cowboy culture and their libertarian leaders, versus business-down eastern bankers

and their old-money political allies.

Now Alberta is poised to reap the biggest bonanza in its history, an economic package giant enough to fundamentally shift the balance of wealth and power westward. The province can control its own destiny more than any other because, in the years to come, Canada will need Alberta far more than Alberta will need the rest of Canada. What remains to be seen is whether the gift of the oil sands will secure the country's prosperity for generations to come, or be the force that finally pushes the straining seams of federalism to their breaking point.

THE LOCALS HAVE taken to calling this northern outpost "Fort McMurray" and it's no hard to see why. The signs of sudden, conspicuous growth are everywhere—from the overflowing sewage treatment plant to the huge morning queues at the two Tim Hortons franchises. Housing development and local infrastructure have not kept up with the surging population, so renting a single bedroom in a shared mobile home will set you back about \$700 a month.

And this, clearly, is just the beginning

The region's population is projected to grow by about 42 per cent in the next five years, all because of the oil sands. The National Energy Board estimates there are approximately 1.6 billion barrels of crude bitumen saturating the ground in northern Alberta. Bitumen—a form of heavy, thick oil laden with sulphur and deficient in hydrogen—can be refined into synthetic crude oil to make everything from gasoline to plastics. It is the lifeblood of every industrialized country. According to the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board, about 178 billion barrels of bitumen are economically recoverable using existing technology—enough to produce more than 150 billion barrels of crude.

If those estimates are accurate, Canada's oil reserves rank second behind only Saudi Arabia's 260 billion barrels. And there are many who believe the current oil sands estimates underestimate the true potential here. The AERB has proposed that rising prices and improved technology could ultimately push the oil sands yield close to 300 billion barrels, which would make the richest petroleum field in the world. By 2015, the oil sands are expected to be producing

roughly three million barrels of petroleum a day. Assuming prices will average US\$40 a barrel (well below where they are today), that suggests annual revenues of close to US\$43 billion.

Last year alone, Alberta collected almost \$500 million in oil sands royalties, and the Athabasca Regional Inuit Working Group, an industry association, estimates that provincial revenues will hit \$2 billion a year by 2011. Add federal and other taxes not directly related to oil sands production and you're looking at billions more. The same industry group recently estimated that between 2007 and 2015, total raw revenues to various levels of government from the oil sands should be close to \$200 billion.

It's all being driven by sales of expansion and start-ups scheduled to commence over the next several years, sending an estimated \$60 billion in construction and development costs slashing through the Canadian economy. The Petroleum Human Resources Council of Canada recently estimated that the number of people directly employed in oil sands operations—currently about 80,000—will reach 84,000 by 2010. An addi-

tional 70,000 construction, manufacturing and services jobs will also be created—40 per cent of them outside Alberta.

Even now, most Canadians still don't fully grasp the significance of the industry, says Rick George, the president and chief executive officer of Suncor. "There's going to be \$6 or \$7 billion in new capital put into this business this year," he says. "What other industry is putting that level of capital into the country? There's no comparison that I'm aware of. And you will see that each and every year for the next 30 years, if not the next 20. Obviously that's a huge benefit to the country."

Experts fly in Alberta. According to a 2009 study by TD Bank Financial Group, the Calgary Edmonton corridor is already the fastest growing economic region in the country, boasting per capita gross domestic product that's 40 per cent above the Canadian average. And the Canada West Foundation recently projected that Alberta's economic growth will lead the country this year and next, due in large part to the booming energy sector. For a province that already boasts zero provincial debt, comparatively low

taxes and a budget surplus, the future is bright, and promises to provide even better services, lower taxes and an influx of migration to the new western tiger. And in Canada, that could pose a problem.

In August 2001, Jean Chrétien forbade the census taker from over Alberta's blossoming of wealth during a speech in Edmonton. "We have to make sure that every person in every part of Canada benefits from the potential and the wealth that belongs to the people of Canada," he said. With those words, Chrétien jabbed a stick into the heart of the west's western alienation. The reaction in the oil patch was swift and indignant. For many Albertans, it was just another sign that Ottawa was intent on making their birthright.

It was also a familiar story. In 1980, Pierre Trudeau's government imposed the National Energy Program, which slapped huge export taxes on oil shippers and capped foreign investment in Canadian oil companies, in part to ensure that eastern Canada's manufacturing base had continued access to cheap oil. The program was deeply resented in Alberta, and was eventually

scrapped by the Mulroney Conservatives. But the bitter aftertaste of the NEP remains.

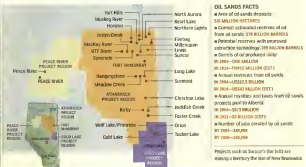
Bruce Cooper wasn't surprised at Chrétien's audacity. A University of Calgary political science professor and staunch critic of the federal Liberals, Cooper fully expects that, as the oil sands continue to develop, they will become a flashpoint in federal-provincial relations. Alberta already pays far more in equalization transfers to federal provinces than it receives in federal program spending. And in the gap grows between rich Alberta and the poorer parts of the country, the demands to spread the wealth are sure to follow—especially if prices for gasoline and heating oil skyrocket, as many predict. It's guaranteed to fan the flames of western discontent, Cooper says. "It's Alberta's oil if you live in Alberta and it's Canada's oil if you live in Ottawa," he says. "Energy has become the basic fault line of federalism."

Sand stresses have already been felt, in the disputes over Hydro-Québec's plans to explore for oil and gas in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and the fight by Nova Scotia and Newfoundland over offshore energy royalties and equalization payments. But the biggest



## WHY THE OIL SANDS WILL GO BOOM

Rising oil prices and declining conventional reserves are driving development



shutdown is yet to come, Cooper says. It will centre on two conflicting agendas: Alberta's desire to reap maximum benefit from oil sands development, and Ottawa's determination to slash greenhouse gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol.

So far, the oil industry and federal government are making soothing noises about the impact of Kyoto on development. After initial threats that some of companies would shelve projects, Canada agreed on Kyoto,

oil field prices, or will there be renewed calls for government intervention, as there was in the 1970s?

These questions may have a pivotal impact in determining Canada's place in an increasingly energy obsessed world, he says. Because when it comes to this country's relationship with the United States and other economic powers, Alberta holds the trump card, but Ottawa gets to decide how it's played.

with those things," says Robert Ebel, chairman of the energy program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, running through a rapid-fire list of the issues routinely cited by the skeptics.

But Cedoz and others say these concerns are insignificant when stacked against the looming prospect of a world oil shortage. Since taking office in 2001, U.S. President George W. Bush has spoken repeatedly about the need to ensure America's "energy secu-

## 'IT'S ALBERTA'S OIL IF YOU LIVE IN ALBERTA AND IT'S CANADA'S OIL IF YOU LIVE IN OTTAWA'

—HARRY COOPER, professor of political science at the University of Calgary and director of the Fraser Institute's Alberta Policy Research Centre

Industry players are now saying they can cope with the costs without destroying their businesses. But many questions remain about how Ottawa will roll emissions back to pre-1990 levels and also will pay for it.

Although producers like Sunoco are reducing emissions on a per-barrel basis with better technology, and are researching ways to cut the amount of gas and water used in the extraction process, the total environmental impact of oil sands development is sure to increase substantially over the next decade. That has many convinced Ottawa is on a collision course with industry. "If government decides to clamp down hard on GHG emissions to meet the Kyoto commitments, or if they use Kyoto and the money-making power to confiscate income that belongs to the province, the anger generated by the National Energy Program would pale in comparison," says Cooper.

Paul Charbonneau agrees, and says the environment is just one of many potential conflicts. What will happen if we're heading for a worldwide oil shortage that will send prices shooting higher? Will the rest of the country, particularly manufacturing-reliant consumers like the Toronto and Montreal, be content to let Alberta profit while their industries are crushed by high-

FREDERICK CEDOZ is used to getting skeptical laughs around Washington when he refers to Canada as a superpower. This country's image as a mostly boring fringe player in world politics remains deeply entrenched in the U.S. capital. But Cedoz, vice-president of operations with the Global Water and Energy Storage Trust, is trying to change that. He describes a new world in which power flows more from the end of a gas nozzle than the barrel of a gun, a world in which Canada must be considered among the most critical brokers of petroleum power.

To be sure, many skeptics remain, in part because oil sands present a much greater technological challenge than conventional oil fields. In operations like Sunoco's M-tennium project, raw oil sand must be dug up using massive power shovels, liquefied using steam so bitumen can be pumped to the surface. Either way, the process is tedious, expensive and consumes vast amounts of natural gas and water. Moreover, oil sands operations have been plagued with controversies and mechanical breakdowns.

"What's going to happen to the oil price? Will they have access to enough natural gas? Rough labour? Enough water? Can they contain the pollution? Now that Canada has signed the Kyoto Protocol, you've got to

think." In his National Energy Policy, outlined four years ago, Bush specifically mentioned Alberta's oil sands as a key building block in his plan to ensure American refineries never run dry. Canada may have opted out of the war in Iraq, but in the campaign to fuel the North American economy, this country is still Washington's most prized ally.

In 2003, the U.S. consumed approximately 20 trillion barrels of petroleum per day, and about 12 million barrels of that was imported. Canada shipped a little over two million barrels a day to its southern neighbour, according to U.S. government estimates, making this country the U.S.'s biggest single energy supplier by far. By 2015, it is projected that Americans will be consuming more than 24 million barrels a day, and if they are going to meet that demand, rising production from the oil sands will be essential.

In early April, oil prices spiked to almost US\$60 a barrel on concerns that global demand is growing faster than the industry can produce new supplies. Analysts at Goldman Sachs, a prominent Wall Street investment bank, predicted that the world oil market may become the early stages of a "super spike" that could send prices rocketing above US\$100 a barrel. All this has only heightened Washington's fear of another oil



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crisis, reminiscent of the gas shortages that followed the Arab oil embargo of the 1970s. Nothing can such the wind out of America's economic sails faster than escalating energy costs, and the Bush administration, far from pushing conservation, is determined to satisfy the nation's thirst for affordable fuel.

"The whole issue of oil is increasingly being driven through the lens of national security," explains Michael Klare, a professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College in Amherst, Mass., and the author of *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict*.

## 'THERE'S GROWING EMPHASIS IN THE U.S. ON ENSURING THOSE RESOURCES COME SOUTH'

—MICHAEL KLARE, professor of peace and security, Hampshire College in Amherst, Mass., and author of *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict*

share College in Amherst, Mass., and the author of *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict*. "The fact that Canada is wealthy, and its oil doesn't have to be shipped by sea on ships that could be blocked or attacked by terrorism, all makes it an appealing. So there will be a permanent glow on imports from Canada."

Energy security is just an American fixation, however. China is in the early stages of an industrial revolution which will nearly increase that country's energy demands over the next decade. And recently Chinese officials have been eyeing the oil sands as a source of precious fuel. In April, a Chinese firm bought a minority stake in MEG Energy Corp., a tiny oil sands developer, and a few days later PetroChina signed a deal with Enbridge Inc. to build a new \$2.5-billion oil pipeline between Edmonton and Canada's west coast, to ship up to 200,000 barrels a day to China. And last week, another Chinese energy company, Sinopec Group, bought a 40-per-cent stake in Synenco Energy Inc.'s Northern Lights Project for \$985 million, and committed to invest an additional \$2 billion to help build the project, aiming for completion by the end of 2010.

Thus, says Klare, it sure to raise eyebrows in Washington. "You're going to see a col-

lapse between increased demand around the world and constrained supplies, and that is inevitably going to lead to greater conflict, especially as the U.S. and China come into competition over access to supplies," he says. "I think there's going to be growing emphasis in the U.S. on ensuring those oil needs resources come south and don't go anywhere else. That's going to be a greater emphasis in the relationship between Canada and the U.S."

With two economic superpowers knocking on the door, Canada should wield greater influence in everything from diplomatic efforts to trade negotiations, says Shawn Finnema, director of the International Studies Program at Portland State University. "Even though Canada is our largest trading partner, it's no secret the country hasn't really been on the political radar screen in Washington," he says. "But I think that's changing now because of the growing importance of Canadian oil. Energy is just so central to all discussions of foreign policy in the U.S. right now. It's going to make Canada a much higher priority in the U.S."

But deciding how best to use that power could prove to be yet another thorny question in Canada. Back in 2006, Jean Chrétien handed the government right back the softwood dispute to Canadian energy exporters, arguing that if the U.S. wanted energy, it would have to accept other exports as well.

"If they were not to have oil and gas from Canada, they will need a lot of wood to heat their homes," he joked. Angus, Chrétien's biographer, expected a new wave in federal-provincial relations. Others don't. Like the sound of anything that might complicate the lucrative flow of petroleum across the border, and those days Suncor's Rick George

will say only that he doesn't think the oil sands should be used as a bargaining chip. And there you have the tension that simmers between Calgary and Ottawa: Two capital, one economic, the other political. Both eager to exploit the oil sands for their own respective, often contradictory agendas.

AT SUNCOR, the bubbling emotions of Canada's oil future continue their methodical task. An electric power show with a scorp-

the size of a two-car garage rips a 100-ton chunk of oil-saturated sand away from a black cliff face. The machine stands three stories tall, and yet is eerily quiet as it goes about its work, merely humming along as it dumps its cargo into the bed of a Caterpillar 797—the world's largest truck, with 12-foot wheels capable of hauling a load of up to 400 tons. The truck rumbles away, loaded down with enough sand to produce about 200 barrels of oil—about US\$10,000 worth at current prices. The work continues, around the clock, 365 days a year. "How can you not be optimistic with these commodity prices?" George says. "And look, prices aren't going to stay this high. There will be volatility, but even with oil in the mid-US\$30s, this industry and Suncor will perform very well."

But Chastain, who can tell you as much about the oil sands as anyone, knows that keeping politics out of the way won't be easy. "The oil sands have tremendous potential, but it also has the whiff of political dynamite about it," he says. "The born-and-bred Albertan in me says I should be shouting from the highest rooftop about how the oil sands are going to pave the way for our future. The historian in me recognizes that rarely are things ever so simple."

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**MACLEAN'S 100**

# IN THE GRIP OF PREDATORS

How a feeding frenzy consumed an oh-so-vulnerable Michael Jackson



**IN THE 1960S**, homosexuals used to cruise at night under the overhang of the old Varsity Stadium in Toronto. Sometimes youths would assemble in the shadows, pushing forward a pretty young boy to parade slowly by them. If an overture was made, the bunch would run out jeering as the "queens" ran into the night, justifying their cruelty with claims that the prey was taking for it by taking the bait. Homosexuals were seen then as "predators" menacing decent men. No one understood that sexual orientation was not a matter

of choice, and if they had understood, it wouldn't have made much difference. Homosexuality had a monopoly on respectability.

At the end of last week, the feeding frenzy that consumed Michael Jackson all through his adult life, California and was winding down. "Now it's all up to the jury," joked Jay Lessa, who had appeared as a defense witness in the trial. "Michael Jackson is in the hands of the jury. Which is kind of ironic. That is the first time they've ever been in the hands of adults." Late-night shows had exhausted pretty much every possible entendre. Jackson was left like the sun-bleached bones of a curious picked clean by vultures. "He's looking pretty old and sick," said one commentator.

That same day, the prosecutor summed up Jackson to the jury in final arguments. "Predators go after the weakest, not the strongest," he said, citing Jackson's compulsions to be with young boys. He listed for consideration as four events of lewd acts on a 13-year-old boy, seeing him drunk and sleeping with his family. Conviction could mean a prison sentence of up to 24 years, effectively bankrupting the entertainer and ending his career at 46 years of age. Just who, one wondered, was the real predator in this miserable little monetary play: Jackson or the many groups feeding off him?

Jackson may or may not be guilty as charged, but that has long been beside the point. Once upon a time in some fairy tale system of jurisprudence, the People could never lose. For Crown attorney or district attorney, all that mattered was arriving at the truth. Two of the accused were acquitted, it would be as much a triumph for the prosecution as a verdict of guilt. What was this case apart from all those other everyday cases in which there is a suspicion that a crime has been committed and that its perpetrator must be brought to justice: is not Jackson's celebrity or bad plastic surgery or the colorful witnesses and players. The Jackson saga has the fascination—of armchair blood sports as your taste—of watching a prey being fed, jubilantly, piece by piece to his predators.

animal being fed, jubilantly, piece by piece to his predators.

Jackson's troubles began in 1993 when his harmonies and success were at a peak. During a visit to a local car rental business, its owner called his young nephew to come and meet Jackson. Soon, the 13-year-old Jerdy Chandler, his mother and sister were spending time at Jackson's Neverland ranch and enjoying trips in his private plane to hotels where Michael and Jerdy shared a bed. The relationship ended when the boy told his therapist of sexual incidents with Jackson and then authorities acted. A criminal investigation was launched with Santa Barbara District Attorney Tom Snodden at the helm. Jackson forked out US\$25 million to settle, and the boy and his family withdrew all allegations.

Surprisingly, no one remained quiet, publicly at least, for almost 11 years. But Jackson's career stalled. His new albums sold poorly. In an effort to shore him up, he agreed to an interview with British broadcaster Martin Bashir. The result was broadcast on Britain's ITV in February 2003. As a 13-year-old named Gavin made a deal against him, Jackson memorably told Bashir and 17 million viewers why he liked to share his bed at night with children. "It's very right. It's very loving," he said. "That's what the world needs now."

The world turned out to be less enthusiastic. The program was rebroadcast on ABC television with progress by a salient Barbara Walters to calm American sensibilities. "As I watched this documentary," Barbara cautioned viewers while centering up to a couple of children, "I felt first... sympathy, then... shock and then finally... sadness."

Shortly after the broadcast, a Los Angeles therapist told authorities that Gavin, who had been fighting cancer, was his patient and had confided about sexual incidents with the entertainer. An investigation by Los Angeles welfare officials quickly followed. Gavin and his mother, (confusingly named) Janet Jackson, vehemently denied



**WHAT SETS** this case apart is not Jackson's celebrity or bad plastic surgery or the colourful witnesses and players. The Jackson saga has the fascination—if armchair blood sports are your taste—of watching a prey being fed, jubilantly, piece by piece to his predators.

Jackson, flanked by his mother and father, started bawling out before his singing career started.

any such behavior had taken place, and Jackson was cleared.

In Santa Barbara County, citre-district attorney Sheldon wedded blood. This was his last term as DA and his last opportunity to get the nigger to sink. He had been thwarted in his 1993 criminal investigation of Jackson, and this time, he wasn't about to let any family take Jackson's money and run.

Magnificently, after eight weeks of talks with Sheldon, Gavin and his team changed their motto: Their "loving" relationship with Jackson had now turned "evil." By November, Sheldon left confident enough to book Jackson on suspicion of child molestation.

Severely afflicted led by Sheldon marched Nevada and the horns of Jackson's solicitors. Mistresses were torn to bits, laundry bags and drawers emptied of underwear. But there was scant evidence. Sheldon's reach yielded nothing apart from a few minuscule perimetric engravings. The sex was cast wider. Judy Chandler, the 1993 accuser, refused to testify. Many children had slept in Jackson's bed by his own admission, but most of them, famously Mucallay Callen, categorically denied any sexual behavior.

The law enforcement officials and Sheldon walked the corners of Jackson's diabolical world. The son of Jackson's former maid testified remembering two groping and "kidding" incidents (clothes on), plus one outright rape inside his trousers. The alleged incidents had taken place 14 years ago, and Jackson had paid off his accusers with US\$2 million, or roughly US\$665,000 per page. The maid testified that the son Jackson in his underwear with a young boy. One ex-employee had seen Jackson take a boy's head. Another claimed to have seen him masturbate a child. Others had seen him as both with children whose underparts were lying next to the bed.

Vigilant staff had opened the old creche. The testimony, true or not, came from disgruntled victims, many of whom had sued Jackson on unrelated matters. When, I thought, actually goes through a person's mind when they feel compelled to testify that they saw an ex-employee take a boy's head?

The world that unfolded in their Santa Barbara courtrooms, waitlist the rows of 1,000 men-strolling flowers and pined-pineal hussies, was a revelation. American justice was tilted open, down not to the bene but to criminal smiles with half-digested rotting wine.

The transcripts filled up with stories from life's losers, people in

**THE TRANSCRIPTS** filled up with stories from life's losers, scraping their memories for smut. In their crosshairs was Michael Jackson, a strange creature almost painful to behold, with his sharply amputated nose, white-painted face and black-hole eyes.

the fringes, wrapping their memories for what, in their crosshairs was Jackson, a strange creature almost painful to behold, with his sharply amputated nose, white-painted face and black-hole eyes. He sat in court looking like the straw man in *The Wizard of Oz*, boneless limbs aside his newly responsible nose and his hollow eyes he had clear rectangular glasses, a man of considerable talent, but considerably less intelligence, whose wealth and bizarre pathology rendered him vulnerable and helpless in front of his predators.

His predators are not difficult to identify. They begin with those who all but sell themselves to offer their children up as bait in order to gain material advantage or extort large sums of money. Jackson's pathology is unquestionably his need for young boys in his bed, whether or not he masturbates or does anything illicit with them. That is his vulnerability, to be first exploited and then punished.

One can easily see how a welfare mother from an impoverished background might be lashed by a marble Jackson and try to better her lot and that of her son through him. All that money, after all, spent on the huge estate of Neverland, when simply finding extra money for clothes for growing children as a recurring nightmare and a proper holiday is impossible dream. Why should a mother wear a shawl if she is not taking a liking to her child? The parents of Jerry hadn't been on money, yet they had happily dangled their son in front of Jackson, leaving a 13-year-old man alone with their 13-year-old in night or hotel rooms.

Jackson was not the first "star" that Janet Jackson had encoun-

tered, though he was undeniably the richest. She was on familiar terms with a second-tier group of entertainment figures including comedians Chris Tucker, George Lopez and Louis L'Amour after controlling her son in custody camp. She had the confidence to control Jay Leno. Gavin had been introduced to Jackie Chan and taken to see Mike Tyson. His career fight had to do with them all, and, in return, Janet and Gavin had become the recipients of many gifts—cars, money, cheques.

Janet Jackson was not just your average American mom. Gavin's father had a conviction for assaulting Janet. Each parent had reacted the other of being abusive to their children. They had been involved in series of petty thefts from relatives. There were court days governing access by the father and several social service interventions of the family, as well as allegations of both welfare

fraud and accusations of fraudulently obtaining mortgage loans of US\$152,000 from J.C. Penney after a fraud with security guards. Such lies are clearly not credited solely by poverty. Janet Jackson's answers in court gave a flavor of her approach to life.

Q You told a reporter that several celebrities were using Facebook to help pay for Gavin's chemotherapy. Didn't you?

A I think what I told her was that they were helping. And to me "help" means giving by Gavin, looking into the water—the canals, things like that. That's what I meant by help.

Q Did you ever withdraw money from [Gavin's] account?

A Yes, I did.

Q How much do you think you withdrew?

A Well, everything that has always been put in.

Q Was any of that money used for medical expenses?

A No, there was no need for medical expenses in the hospital because everything was covered.

It is not hard to envisage just how Janet Jackson might have been "permeated" to change her view of Jackson's actions by the DA's office. She was vulnerable to charges for welfare fraud, negligence of Gavin and more serious charges—possibly even sexual fraud. And Janet Jackson over had a notion of going for the big payoff, a conviction of Jackson on any one of the charges laid against him would virtually guarantee it.

The trial soon on Judge Rodney Melick struggled. Alleged late-night *Madeline* deliveries, he ruled with a straight face, would not be admissible. Accounts of alleged crooks in the presence of children could be admitted, as was the image of two pairs of men holding trucks lying side by side on the bathroom floor. All allegations about Jackson's behavior with young boys could be brought up, even though many had ever been proved in court. And finally, the videotape of the police interview with Gavin was admitted, not for its content, the judge stressed, but for the jury to evaluate Gavin's "denial" or not.

The admission of that tape was a terrible blow to the defense. What on earth did the prosecution mean to disregard the entire credibility of the boy's appearance? If it were possible to disown credibility by lying or looking, it would become impossible and the perjury trial would be both a grievous blow. At the same, commentators were struck by the contrast between Gavin's aggressive manner in the trial and the hesitant slumped on the police video. It seemed as if all of them that the videotape showed him "apologetic" accounts of the terrible ordeal Jackson's sexual overtures had caused, and had as an intermediary that was hard to deny.

But police tapes are always today's matter. The influence police exert in their role of authority is enormous, and when it is a child or a person of limited mental or moral equilibrium, the balance becomes even more unequal. The prosecution police would give Gavin that he is a victim and whatever he accuses is a bad man is a so straightforward that to say that the evidence that emerges is all but worthless.

As the tape was played, Michael changed in his seat. His life







**IN THE ABSENCE** of violence, fear and physical coercion, what actual harm has Michael Jackson done? These children have received millions for their moments in his bed. Before they were told it was a crime, they couldn't wait to get back to Neverland.

seemed as wicked as his fate. Hungry Dumpty had fallen off the wall and all the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't put Humpty together again. Indeed, nothing can be as it was for Jackson. His future has been destroyed. A Jiffy Kwikie sculpture of Jackson with his pet monkey Bubbleb, may have sold for \$385,000 each, but Jackson himself will be lucky to have money for Bubbleb's peanuts. The problem is not only his spending, but what happens when the thousand-eyed monster of legal action in America takes hold.

Inevitably, the IRS will reassess Jackson and demand more tax. The Bank of America already has terminated his credit and disallowed his loan to an aggressive hedge fund. Insurance companies will balk at paying his legal fees. Neverland, it is said, has been sold already. Jackson's holdings will be sold and the recording studio ruins, sponsors disappear, and he is forced to sell good assets at the sale prices to keep the enormous juggernaut of lawyers and accountants going. Before guilt or innocence is established, his money will have been divided up by the legal system for the benefit of the legal system and the government. A verdict of innocence would help, but if he is convicted of only the alcohol charge, and suits will follow where a far lower threshold of proof is required.

But proof of what? Is there really any doubt that he had children in his bed for his pleasure? And who was the damage to them? Child molestation of any sort is not a desirable thing, and I can't think of any culture that has viewed it so, or even viewed it as a neutral sexual orientation. But in the absence of violence, fear and physical

coercion, in the total absence of penetration, what actual harm has he done? These children have received millions for their moments in his bed. Before they were told it was a crime, they couldn't wait to get back to Neverland.

Come on in and out of fashion, as guys will know. Less than 30 years ago, drunk driving was viewed as naughty, always an offense, but a bit of a joke. Today, drunk driving is akin to premeditated murder. Today, any form of sexuality involving underage persons or deprivation of power is looked at in our social conscience with the utmost gravity.

The disparity between Jackson's mental age and that of his actions seems vast and great. Twelve and 13 year-old boys often giggle together over porn and experiment with their newly discovered sexuality. Jackson's high falsetto voice may come and go, but his childish behavior is fixed. He seems stuck somewhere in the emotional landscape of adolescence. Unusually, he resembles every detail Peter Shaffer's notion of Mozart in his film *Amadeus*. "This man had written his first concert at the age of five. Did it show?" It takes like that written on the face?" the thoughtful and profound composer Salieri muses before meeting Mozart. Then he sees "that giggling, dirty-minded creature crawling on the floor." Shaffer's Mozart is a genius in the minds of a 12 year-old.

Less appeared as a deft actor, while late night shows exhibited every subtle eccentricity.

Genius doesn't justify evil, even then, but in the face of his brilliance, shouldn't society show just a little more tolerance of Jackson's peculiarity? What, after all, does one do with an idiosyncratic person of many sexual

quarts including a taste for young boys whose own gender, religion, by his appearance, garments and conversation is at best ambiguous? Jackson sits right on the border that separates madness and criminality, blackness and whiteness, grown up and child, and possibly sanity and insanity.

The adults who encircled Jackson as employees or acquaintances quickly nuzzled him up and considered him fair game. They were on safe ground: ultimately his trial determined that you are at a great disadvantage in the legal system if you are either ill or a certain socio-economic level or above it.

So his predators have safely gorged themselves. There is no conceivable way that the disparity between the damage Michael Jackson has caused those children and the amounts he has paid out can be described in any other terms than extortion. Everyone has been afraid: those of us in the entertainment business are always hungry for a story, and Jackson has been quite a meal. The prosecutors and police who seek to make their careers out of converting high-profile defendants have had their glory. Prosecuting crimes is their job, of course, but the actual harm Jackson represents and the effort and money spent on prosecuting him are simply not commensurate.

With the exception of the minor crimes, none of this is illegitimate or illegal. It is not a crime to be a career vulgar or scavenger, and the sight of a rich vulnerable person being out the pocket is a lot of people. I suppose this case simply filled a feeding frenzy of our times. It's not an edifying spectacle.

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## THE GHOST OF BRE-X RISES

Mysterious Mike de Guzman is said to be dead, but for some he lives on

IS MICHAEL de GUZMAN DEAD OR ALIVE? Eight years after the Bre-X Minerals fraud was uncovered, the face of its central figure still haunts us. Last month, it seemed, he briefly stepped out from the shadows. And just like that, he was gone again. Or was it all just another hoax? Anything is possible for the man who pulled off Canada's heist of the century and then disappeared into a cloud of mystery. We want to believe he's out there, that we might catch him one day and make him pay for his sin. But our hopes for

parade and answer are in vain. Deep down, we know it. And that's why we still care.

According to the official version of events, Bre-X's exploration manager drove himself from an Alouette helicopter on March 26, 1997, while it was cruising 800 feet above the Indonesian jungle. With his body swayed by hypnosis (it and his conscience tormented by his many lies, he could take it no more), he left behind a few hastily scribbled suicide notes, a Italian watch

and a slew of unanswered questions.

Days later, it was revealed that de Guzman had helped carry out the biggest mining fraud in modern history. Drill results from Calgary-based Bre-X's property in Buning, Indonesia, had been faked to indicate a massive gold find. When others tried to confirm the deposit, they found nothing. The stock, which surged from pennies to more than \$250 a share, plunged in 30 minutes and was duped out of \$4 billion

Fodorhof (second from left) and de Guzman (third from left) pose at the Buning site

and a slew of unanswered questions. Days later, it was revealed that de Guzman had helped carry out the biggest mining fraud in modern history. Drill results from Calgary-based Bre-X's property in Buning, Indonesia, had been faked to indicate a massive gold find. When others tried to confirm the deposit, they found nothing. The stock, which surged from pennies to more than \$250 a share, plunged in 30 minutes and was duped out of \$4 billion

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and dreamed of playing on the Philippine national team, until one night he was attacked by a gang of thugs who beat him and shattered his knee. For the rest of his life, he walked with an awkward limp.

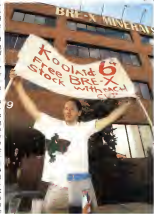
Though he could no longer soar on the basketball court, de Guzman never lost his love of the spotlight. Associates described him as a gregarious companion who liked to party hard and drink karaoke. He had a wife and six children in the Philippines. But his career demanded constant travel to distant mining prospects, giving him plenty of opportunity to indulge his affection for the opposite sex. Over the years, he married three other women around Asia, and managed to keep them all secret from each other.

For de Guzman, Buning was the paradise of a southerner's unenviable career, much of it spent chasing gold deposits along fault lines and spent volcanoes in Southeast Asia with his buddy John Fodorhof, a Dutch-born prospector who would become chief geologist for Bre-X. Buning had been sporadically explored in the 1960s, and in 1989 an Australian company called Mantapex gave up on the property and walked away. Bre-X stepped in and, in 1993, made its first claim to find significant amounts of gold. By 1997, the company said it had found up to 200 million ounces—almost four times the size of the world's biggest known deposit.

The Buning discovery made the Bre-X warheads start in the mining world. Towards March of 1997, de Guzman made a presentation to analysts and industry execs at the annual Prospectors and Developers Association convention at Toronto's grand Royal York Hotel. He was, by now, a multi-millionaire thanks to his surging value of his stock options, and his conviction centered his identity around the Buning piles, revelled in his new fame, and spent his free time at a Toronto strip club, begging the executives with tales of his wealth and beauty. What no one

knew was that half a world away, geologists with Bre-X's partner, Prospeco McMillan Copper & Gold, had discovered the secret of Buning. They called de Guzman and told him to get back to Indonesia right away.

Within days, de Guzman was dead. Or so we were told.



**THE** Bre-X scandal revealed that some very sophisticated analysts and executives had been suckered in by a deception so simple, a child could have conceived it

Associated say de Guzman didn't seem much like a man about to end it all. He played and dined with his Philippine mates on the long flight back to Asia. He made a stop in Bali for a medical checkup to monitor his ongoing struggle with malaria and hepatitis. On March 18, he checked in to a hotel in Bu-

After the stock's collapse, some investors gathered outside Bre-X's Calgary office

kipapan with Bre-X mineralogist Rudy Vega, and wrote a memo to Fodorhof, detailing an upcoming meeting with Indonesia's Ministry of Mines. He explained that financial data and a corporate history were being prepared. He mentioned that his doctor recommended seeing a specialist for his liver, and finished

by saying that he'd be back in Jakarta at the end of the month and would update him later.

After facing the memo to Fodorhof, he and Vega went out boozing at a nearby karaoke bar, where de Guzman belted out one of his favorite tunes, Frank Sinatra's My Way, before heading back to the hotel. Two weeks later, the helicopter the next day, still a little hung over. Vega got off in Samarinda. De Guzman continued on toward Buning, but he never arrived.

The Bre-X hoax was revealed just days later, and it quickly became clear that some of the world's most sophisticated analysts and executives had been suckered in by a deception so simple, a child could have conceived it. After drilling core samples, the rocks in crushed so it can be tested for mineral content. At some point between drilling and sampling, someone got onto Bre-X's camp and literally sprinkled known gold into the crushed rock. It appears the gold was purchased from local Dayak tribesmen who panned in the nearby rivers.

Perhaps that's why it took so long to discover. No one thought for a minute that anybody would try something so brazen on such a remote scale. But when Prospeco, Bre-X's operating partner, handed picked by the Indonesian government, drilled holes right next to Bre-X's they came up empty. As the investigation proceeded, all pointed back to de Guzman, and questions swirled around his apparent death. It had faked the whole thing to escape punishment when it became clear his lies were about to be uncovered? Or was he the scapegoat, murdered so that the Buning could blame it all on the dead guy? Circumstances surrounding de Guzman's

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plunge only fueled the rumors. The body wasn't recovered from a jungle swamp for four days, by which time it was already severely decomposed and partially eaten by wild boars. It was barely examined and cremated without confirmation of dental records. Fingerprint evidence was inconclusive. DNA tests were never done. Some said he was carrying a bag with US\$300,000 cash on the day he disappeared. But no one can be sure, the money was never found.

For more than eight years, that was all we knew about the mysterious death of Michael de Guzman: Lots of theories, deep doubts, and nothing more. But a couple of weeks ago, the ghost of Ben-X reappeared. One of de Guzman's widows said she received a \$250,000 money order from her supposedly dead husband earlier this year. She told a reporter from Malaysia's *The Straits Times* that the money was sent "from a [Cebu] bank branch in mind." "I never believed he was dead," she said. "And given the survival status of the whole son of Ben-X after, her belief is hard to dismiss. With a fortune of at least \$3 million in illicit Ben-X stock profits, de Guzman could be living in anonymous luxury in some tropical hideaway. Ben Grace de Guzman never pretended any proof of the money transfer and has not gone into a lawyer's quagmire if it were called a ghost's gift."

Naturally, any suggestion that Gormann might be alive seems up against interest among those who watched the BreX disaster unfold. Thousands of people, most of them Canadians and Americans, lost a fortune when the truth about BreX was revealed. But the revelation of BreX is going deeper than that.

Canada has long carried a reputation as a haven for swindlers and stock promoters. In 1989, *Fortune* magazine labelled the Vancouver Stock Exchange the "scam capital of the world." We've never been able to shake that image, and BreX's trail leads to Exhibit A for those who consider this country a reservoir of bad news and fraud.

lars and ineffectual cops. That, more than anything, is what sustains our fascination with de Guzman: the nagging realization that no one has ever really been brought to justice for Tre-X. And, in all likelihood, no one ever will be.

The RCMP abandoned its criminal investigation in 1999, after spending almost two years reviewing more than 600,000 documents related to the case. The Mounties said there wasn't enough evidence to



**AT THE ROOT** of our fascination with de Guzman is the realization that no one has ever been brought to justice for Bre-X. And, in all likelihood, no one ever will be.

selling stock. He withdrew to the Bahamas when his company began to unravel, and denied any part in the fraud. In 1998, he died after suffering a brain aneurysm. Whatever he knew about the Baring heist, he took to the grave.

Felthorpe, the chief gaoler who made \$84 million selling *Joe Sixpack*, is the only person ever to face charges. In 1999, the Ontario Securities Commission charged him with eight counts of insider trading and creating false statements. He has denied any role in the fraud, and for a long time continued to claim there was no gold in financing. The case was bogged down for years in procedural wrangling and only recently re-started. Felthorpe could face a fine of up to \$8 million, and several years in prison, if a federal judge believes his charges are true. Meanwhile, he can't be extradited to his Cayman Islands home. He's due to spend the next five days in his Caribbean paradise, no articles of the *Wall Street Journal*.

Taxes raise depressing is the knowledge that it could still happen again. The Canada's proposed weaknesses in the system that have never been fixed. Canada's police forces still lack the resources to track and prosecute sprawling frauds, and the various provincial market regulators remain uncoordinated, underfunded and undermanned.

Eight years have passed, and still the memory of the X provides theme and anger in this country. It made fools of us all: the analysts and journalists who breathlessly reported the failed results, the executives who claimed to partner with the X, the investors who got sucked in to the hype, and the authorities who were seemingly powerless to do anything about it.

Is Michael de Garmar dead or alive? Don Abding's next guess gives the answer: He is alive and well, living the high life somewhere in our minds at least, if not in reality.

Read Steve Kirsch's weblog, "All His Best," at [www.machinists.org/diffusers/](http://www.machinists.org/diffusers/)

[illegible]

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# BURDEN OF BEASTS

At his 'ark' on a Fraser Valley farm, a B.C. businessman tends to hundreds of endangered species

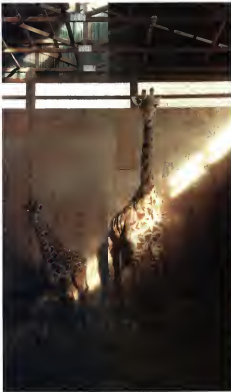
**IF YOU WERE** worth an outrageous amount of money, what would you do with it? If you were Vancouver businessman Gordon Blackstone, you'd build a menapheonol ark on verdant Fraser Valley farmland near Port Langley, B.C., and you'd stock it with hundreds of the world's most endangered animals: mountain bongo antelope from East Africa, Malayan tapirs (combining a cross between bear and bear), African wild dogs, Vancouver Island marmoset, if you can snag one of the population considered you a "wing nut," so Blackstone put it, so what? They laughed at Noah, too.

And if the great tech bear reversed your fortunes, selling your company at a cost of \$100 million, what would you do? If you were Blackstone, you'd ponder the wreckage of Global Light Telecommunications (one of many businesses from restaurant chains to telephone companies, he's encountered over

the years), and you'd ask yourself, as Blackstone did, "How could I be such a dumb-ass?" Then you'd start to worry about the animals.

That's where Blackstone, 54, sits today. Somewhat, actually, in a city pen at the 50-hectare Nicome River View Conservation and Breeding Centre, affectionately dubbing the territory of Twenty, a heavy-lifted eagle. This new mother could inflict some 300 kg of hurt on this human intruder, if she weren't so darned comfy. The firm-in-hour's commute from the office towers of Vancouver, Blackstone's father-in-law—was purchased in 1986 by him and his wife, Yvonne, who shares his passion for the rare and the threatened.

Over time, the Blackstones have underwritten most of the considerable expense—some \$350,000 a year—of protecting, feeding and breeding a remarkably diverse



Blackstone with an African bongo, and his giraffe, ring-tailed lemur, rhinoceros, cheetah. And just from here, he says, "We can think we have the right to take them away."

extended family. Some 10 African wild dogs, rare and ruthlessly efficient predators, can off a meal of cow legs to the distant hills of their enclosure. The towering patents of a three-month-old Moss giraffe glare precociously at strangers approaching. Yes, an Indian rhino who outweighs your average SUV, waddles by the electric fence of his enclosure, oblivious to the rain. Some 14 Cowie's gazelles will go this year to a breeding centre in the Middle East. Native herds of graceful B.C.-based alouatta antelope and Moss's gazelles will be sent to Senegal in coming years to replenish decimated wild stocks. Four of the centre's Vancouver Island marmoset, one of the world's rarest mammals, were returned to the wild last year. Seventeen more hibernates in a secure enclosure, behind a double layer of wire fencing. A few marmoset won't change the world, Blackstone concedes, but look at the line of other creatures following them toward oblivion. "God put them here," he says. "Do we think we have the right to take them away?"

Even before their fortunes went south, the Blackstones had transformed the farm into a nonprofit sanctuary. "It was probably just the stage where I could manage it properly, and not just financially," he says. "It's an awesome responsibility." There are now about 70 volunteers. A director based in southern B.C. is in charge of the centre's self-sustaining animal adoptions, corporate sponsorships, a shifting list of the increasing number of and a good Canadian species, and additional facilities to bring in more paying visitors.

For all that, it will never be a zoo. Animals here have the space to bide, the freedom to roam, rut and fight. Some have food. Offspring are raised with animals housed in overwinter. While many profit-driven zoos are producing "lab rats" suitable only for public display, says Blackstone, the society's aim is to raise animals capable of being returned to their natural habitat.

He applies his own survival instincts to rebuilding his business life, using what income he can from his latest venture, a mining company in Mexico, to keep his ark afloat. In conversations, Blackstone fluctuates between two positions, the corporate and wild kingdom—both ruled by the law of the jungle. "I'll bounce back," he says. "It's the animals he worries about."

# FEEL-GOOD VIOLENCE

From *Mr. and Mrs. Smith* to *Cinderella Man*, Hollywood sells the sentimental side of brutality



**A FUNNY THING HAPPENED** to me on the way to the movies the other night. Cycling through a housing project, I hit a speed bump, went flying off my bike and broke my fall with my scrapping the pavement. Nothing's broken, except my cellphone. Ten minutes later, I'm at the multiplex, picking up tickets for *Cinderella Man*—the saga of a boxer with a fierce left jab—and the kindness of my left hand are brightly bleeding. Looks like I've been in a fight. I ask for a first aid kit at the box office,

and no one blinks. Guess this happens all the time at the multiplex. Maybe some kids get head injuries playing on the video arcade. Anyway, by the time I get to my seat, with my hand surprisingly bandaged, I feel like the *Method Man*. The stadium's flowing. I'm in the nose, eager for another rematch with Ron Howard. That Hollywood pappy. He's got a lot to atone for—*Cocoon*, *Backdraft*, *A Beautiful Mind*. Just let me get a piece of this.

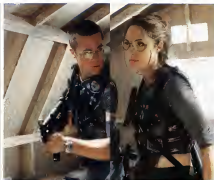
I can't wait. This is my second fight movie in a week. The other is *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*, and it's about fighting your wife. *Cinderella Man* is about fighting for your wife. One movie is an inspirational drama based on the true story of a boxer punching his way out of the Depression—Rocky meets *Schindler's List*. The other is a slapdash hour-and-a-half-hour and-a-half-hour of action designed to kill each other—*Marriage, Impossible*. But both films are fairly tame, with happy endings and a feel-good brutality that's badly lacking in our daily lives.

What was the last (maybe) in a good fight? Not just an argument, but a fist fight. Or better said, a brick-and-mortar struggle? But that's why God invented Hollywood. Here are two movies that deliver

violence in sentiment—both dedicated to the notion that there is nothing more emotionally satisfying than trying to tip someone's head off. I can already see the self-help books flying off the shelf: *Save Your Marriage With This* and *Her Man's Life: Or How to Get the Next Succession by Fighting for the Heavyweight Championship of the World*.

**Mr. and Mrs. Smith** is a featherweight contender, a shadow-boxing exercise in frustration. We're all curious to check out the chemistry between the leads, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, who have been "linked" in the tabloids. That rumormongering they've denied, may be as suspect as Tom Cruise's mass affection for Katie Holmes. But then a narrative in seeing Brad and Angelina, who may or may not be in the early throes of romance, can't be named roughly on the radio.

Unsurprisingly, their best scenes unfold before the opening credits, as the Smiths compare notes with a marriage counselor. It then takes ages for them to discover each other's career professions in measure—which we've known from the start because we've seen the trailer. And, yes, there is chemistry between Pitt and Jolie, but it's soon buried under a tedious underplay of scenes. The Smiths put the best face in their marriage in a high-tech *War of the Roses* that leaves



Pitt and Jolie square off in a high-tech brawl, *Crowe* (left) is again the underdog gladiator.

their suburban house in ruins. This is not the kind of bang-bang we want to see between these two actors. We're left looking for

that's so about as sexy as a game of pinball.

Although the stars studied with weapons experts and a former member of the U.S. Navy SEAL unit, any attempt at realism is shredded by a ludicrous script. Screenwriter Steven Kozmar first wrote it as an M.A. thesis, and he's connected a featherweight hybrid—action-ball musical comedy action thriller. Director Doug Liman, the slick hand behind *The Bourne Identity*, pulls out all the stops with a James Bond ascent of artillery fired as a secret cellist strums with aquatic grace. *Angelina's* move pops opens to reveal a hidden weapons cache. In a role reversed flip of sexual etiquette, Brad plays the softie while Angelina is the blade throwing (a coarsening) domesticer unable to loose her emotions. And Vince Vaughn, who made his breakthrough in *Lemony Snicket's* (2004), adds an offset touch in a cameo mouthed over to a screenwriter's ego. But it all adds up to another Hollywood movie inflated with its own hyperbole style. In a world where everything's ironic, nothing is at stake.

**Cinderella Man, on the other hand, is a classic period drama, made with an unloyal, earnest conviction. It bears a certain resemblance to that other boxing film about a white, dirt-poor underdog fighting for a slice of the American Dream—Chris Kenwood's *Million Dollar Baby*. But this one is a genuine fairy tale, not a tragic melodrama. And Ron Howard doesn't hide the sentiment with a knee-bait punch as squarely on the nose that *Starwood*, by contrast, seems as sincere as Ingmar Bergman.**

A battered Russell Crowe plays boxing legend James "Bulldog" Braddock, a blue-collar hero who made New Jersey anything long before Bruce Springsteen. With courage, Braddock's fight career collapses in 1938, just as the stock market crash triggers the Great Depression. After a broken right hand forces him out of the sport, he struggles to get work on the docks, and relies on handouts to keep his wife (Gloria Zellweger) and three kids alive. Through a fluke, Braddock gets thrown back into the ring and scores an upset. That begins a miraculous comeback. By the end of *Cinderella Man* by writer Darren Korman, he becomes a folk hero, a beacon of courage in hard times. The drama climaxes in 1938 with a

brutal showdown between our humble flyweight and a flamboyant, war-mocking monster—Max Baer (Craig T. Nelson), who's credited with killing two previous challengers to his heavyweight title.

At this 144-minute saga's midpoint, I've got my guard up. Maybe it's my bleeding hand, but I'm almost awaking like they're in an old movie, making like Humphrey Bogart? Why does everything have to look so brown and grey and burnished? Were there no colors in the Depression? Hmmm, that now looks false. And what's with the Celie music behind the whir of the punching bag? Laboriously, the film establishes Braddock as a loving husband and a faithful father. But 7 or 8 years since his dark side, everybody has a dark side. Resigned to cynicism, I pass the time trying to recognize the Toronto location where most of the movie was filmed. Not to see Magic Leaf Gardens standing in for Madison Square Garden. Hey, there's Nicholas Campbell, the De Vito guy, playing a wise-guy reporter at ringside.

But sports movies aren't supposed to be subtle. And when they connect, the more you root, the harder you fall. I find myself getting ruder punched in the fight scenes—blending with the kind of physical effect I used to get watching *fight* by *Rocky*. When Braddock's trainer's piggybacked (and *Crowe*) tells his fighter to "go wide" his opponent and drive his nose through his skull, I'm with him. Yes. Let's see that Howard's production works for the boxing sequence. They look real. He doesn't cheat with a little of his own, you can follow the guy. And Crowe looks like the real deal. He's still the guy from *Gladiator*, a man fighting for wife and family, getting his sanctity if not dead. And even if you know the ending, the suspense is visceral.

At one point, trying to tell his wife's story to a priest, Crowe's character says, "People are sentimental.... We both know the name of this game, and it sure as hell ain't pugilism." He's either been talking to a Hollywood mogul. Violence in movies like *Cinderella Man* isn't a blood sport's sacrament. An act of faith that's better than sex. At 11 p.m. this, blood is running up show through the bandages, a kink manifestation of the flesh. Nasty job, film criticism. But there's no telling how far a guy will go to feed his family.

ON THE WEB With *Angelina* above a film critic picks up the camera's eye (Brian D. Johnson's footage from *Crowe* at [www.cineclick.com/crowe.html](http://www.cineclick.com/crowe.html))

# THE GIRLFRIEND GETTERS

Too shy and awkward to make a move? A new dating service can break the ice.

**AT FIRST GLANCE**, Tim looks like a pretty trendy guy. With a bit of a beard, a Toronto club, with two girls on his arm, and yet he's keeping the room for more. "See that barista over there?" he says to the brunette by his side. "She's cute." Not only do his companions, Ariana Dale and Thuy ("Twenty") Nguyen, agree, but Dale walks up to the girl who caught Tim's eye and says, "I like your necklace." They chat for a few minutes, then Dale reports back, "Yep, she's nice and approachable." So, Tim has got himself some supportive girlfriends—or he's paying them.

Actually, Dale and Nguyen do charge. For a total of \$275, they'll hang out with a guy at the public location of his choice for three hours, pretending to be his friends while trying to make him look desirable. And they chat up attractive girls, eventually drawing them into a conversation with their date. The Los Angeles originators of the ruse—and somewhat of a starring—single tend to label the service Wing Girls, but since Dale's Toronto dating company is called Wink Singles, the Toronto contingent refer to themselves as Wink Girls. "I don't see this on CBS," says Tim, 36. "This guy was at a bar with two wing girls. I thought it looked like a good idea. Of course, the guy on the show ended up dead. Those things better stop!" Well, it does and it doesn't.

The case is short but Tim admits to being one of those despondent nice guys who has trouble starting conversations with women. "Once it's all over, I'm fine." In this disheveled crowd, Dale and Nguyen suggest that the former cruise ship waitress roadman and high school teacher play up the fact he now owns his own office-supply company. But are women more impressed by a man's ability to fill paper than his love of books and travel? Considering Tim's reluctance to make any moves, we may never know.

About 15 minutes after first contact, the brunette and her friends have inched closer to Tim. Dale and Nguyen: Tim's been introduced, but so the girl gets, he hangs back. Then the dance floor flaps up, the music gets

louder and the two groups drift apart. Dale and Tim agree he's missed his opportunity—but it's hard to imagine what this shy guy could have added to a discussion about hairstyles and accessories.

Attempt more drinks in, Tim goes another "target"—a blond, at the club for her friend's bachelor party. When Dale notices the woman is being aggressively hit on by another guy, she makes her move, quietly saying to her, "Looks like you need some help." She

was with Tim and really wanted to dance with him, it was her way of saying, "Look, he's going to dance with me and not you, even though he's here with you." But they don't know that it works to our benefit.

While Tim enjoys the show and plays along for a while, this isn't the type of female he's looking for. "Those girls were a little obvious," he says later. "I don't want this." At 12:30 a.m.—with only half an hour left before the Wing Girls are off-duty and Tim



At a chill-out Toronto club, Dale (left) and Nguyen help Tim look like a happening guy

fragile me and said, "Thank you so much, I do." Dale recalls later, "Then I said, 'I don't usually do this, but I'm with a friend and he thinks you're cute.'" She asked Dale to point him out. "That's when I noticed she was wearing an engagement ring," says Dale.

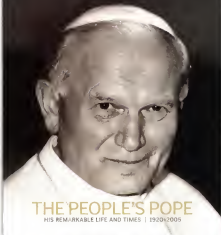
Strike two, but Tim looks like he's having fun. "They're shameless," he says of his wingmen, impressed by their ability to infiltrate a group of strangers. Just then, two women who've been running the floor push into the circle where Tim, Dale and Nguyen are dancing. Wearing low-dung pants and a cropped shirt to show off her lower-back tattoo, one begins gyrating in Tim's direction. Dale says this happens a lot. "She was

the real curvy back into a wallflower—things get desperate. The crew searches all areas of the bar and the outside patio for any remaining hotties. But no one turns up. "Every club in this or that," Tim says a few days later. "I didn't necessarily pick up somebody, but the girls did their job."

Dale's had success stories so far and past over a 50-per-cent success rate, meaning a guy goes home with a hooker number or a girl. Even though Tim wasn't one of the lucky ones, Dale was pleased. "At the beginning of the night his body language was more reserved," she says. "By the end of the night he was having a good time. The next day I said to him, 'You see, there's nothing wrong with you. Women are willing to talk to you—just give them a chance.'" Sounds like the kind of advice you get from room, far from

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MACLEAN'S 100



## Film | This is the DJ version of Spinal Tap

Two decades after *This Is Spinal Tap*, it's hard to imagine anyone putting a fresh spin on this worn knock-off of the music mockumentary. But that's what Canadian filmmaker Michael Dewar (*Julius*) has done with *It's A Date*. Peter King, a comedy that taps into the sophisticated humor of education, is the story of Frankie Wilde, a supervisor at the Stanford Beas who discovers he's going deaf. Then a cruise through a cocaine whirlwind as he loses his audience, his wife and his mind. Among the inspired bits of physical

comedy is a suicide attempt in which Wilde lights a chair of fireworks against his head, then jumps behind a swimming pool to drown the fuse, only to land on a plastic tarp. As the *It's A Date* Wilde, Britt actor Paul Kane plays a guitar performance. And

Wilde lights a chair of fireworks against his head, then jumps behind a swimming pool to drown the fuse, only to land on a plastic tarp. As the *It's A Date* Wilde, Britt actor Paul Kane plays a guitar performance. And



Canadian comic actor Michael Dewar shows a character as his most skilled, gold-digger manager.

But what's odd about the film is how it shows its own lack-of-cynicism to salvage romance and redemption from satire. As the story unfolds, you are actually into Dewar, 32, graduating from comic defunct to serious filmmaker. Shot in the tropical light of Maui and its sub scene, Peter King is a visual treat. Filming on the Mediterranean island was difficult, says Dewar. The heat was oppressive, and to shoot in crowded clubs he had to pay off the local mafia "with rolls of cash." But as a result, the movie is infused with vibrant scenes of place. "One of the best bits is the world is going people partying," says Dewar. "It always looks like a beer commercial." Peter King looks more like an ad for scotch. Dewar next plans to direct a film of Terry Southern's 1970 Hollywood-spiced novel *Mr. Klein*—and a comedy about a Koolhaas-like architect devoted to human cloning, sexual freedom and the hollow Earth theory. Sounds like another cult hit.

ARLAN D. JOHNSON



## Music | Tales from Highway 54-40

Most Canadians 54-40 have been to guitar for 24 years—and will release their 12th album, *You're Everything*. June 14, but they've never played the Canadian indie rock festival north of Montreal, until this year (June 1 to 13). Local singer Neil O'Brien shared with *Maclean's* his memorable moments from other indie festivals.

"We did *Edgeland* in Ontario, Ont., at the Woodland all the bands were playing at the festival. I saw *Grass* and *Grass* and *Grass* were there and we kind of looked out the lounge—

after a few drinks, we started singing Beatles songs around the grills.

"We played the *IndieRock* Rock Festival in Mexico in 1995. It was as the *Scramblers* out of Vancouver and the rest of the bands were all from the South West. It was still a Communist country. All the young people there were wearing *Grass* t-shirts with anyone from the West. By the end of the week, I'd traveled all my clothes. And we played in the areas where Team Canada beat the Russians in 1952."

## MACLEAN'S 100 | TOP 10

So many trips, so little time to canoe

Calgary-based Allister Thomas (rd. Gwenda's best friend) is back. Boston's *Maclean's* Press/Travel Book, lists his favorite canoe/kayak spots in Canada. 1. Bear on Lake (OBC) 2. Milk River (AB) 3. Chardonnay River (BC) 4. Chardonnay River (AB) 5. Algonquin Provincial Park (Ont.) 6. Ontario River (Que.) 7. Gros Morne National Park (NB) 8. Labrador 9. Bonnet Plume River (Que.) 10. South Nahm River (NB) 11. Back River (Que.)



Top 10 runs during Maclean's century

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## THOSE FEARFUL FRENCH

Ultimately, says one expert, France is 'a nation that's afraid of change'

**SOMETIMES WHAT'S INTERESTING** about "No" isn't the word but the reasoning.

On May 29, 55 per cent of French voters rejected Europe's proposed new constitution, which aimed to streamline the administration of a European Union that has swollen to 25 members. Three days later, 62 per cent of Dutch voters added their own No, probably killing the treaty.

For the moment, let's ignore the effect of these votes on Europe and concentrate instead on what that No says about France. It isn't flattering.

The comparison is to see this referendum as France's Charlotte-town moment, when much of the electorate refused to see what their political class were feeding them. In Canada in 1992, all the franc politicians and editorialists wanted to do was to confirm their preferred constitutional amendment. We declined the offer. But it's more accurate to say that in France the voters simply did their duty one better. The nation's political discourse has been built on a suspicion of outsiders and a rejection of a few basic rules of economics and social justice.

"The first word on mine 'No' campaign poster was 'Turkey,' even though Turkey's admission to the EU was not on the ballot and won't be for years. Campaign debates were full of reference to the 'Polish plumber' who would, it was said, come to France and steal French jobs. It was common to hear opposition leaders say they wanted none of 'this liberal France'—'liberal' in the classical sense, meaning free trade and small governments. Odd, since the European Union was conceived almost half a century ago by the French, among others—as a free trade area.

"Obviously when the French voted against 'change,' Timothy B. Smith told me: 'It's just a nation that's afraid of change. There are just too many comfortable people who are afraid that Europe might threaten their core facts.'" Echoed Smith, an associate professor of history at Queen's University in Kingston, Ont., because he has written a scathing new book called *France as Obedient* (94



June, Inequality and Globalization since 2000. Smith's book wasn't published here but in England, by Cambridge University Press. And while it's been favourably reviewed in the *Financial Times*, it hadn't been reviewed anywhere in Canada until right now.

Smith has lived in France, loves it dearly, and wishes it would change. Not to abandon its social-democratic model—Smith is an admirer of modern-day Sweden who leads his book with criticism of the U.S. economy—but to get it right. His book opens with a tremendous rant against France's claims to "solidarity."

"A solidaristic society is one which redistributes wealth to low-wage earners and opens up the doors of social mobility. A solidaristic society pays the price for its solidarity in the here and now, instead of leaving the bill to future generations," he writes. "In a solidaristic nation, one segment of society (the retired and the elderly, or those aged 29

and over) would not consume over 70 per cent of all 'social' spending—as they do in France. The graduates [of a tiny number of elite schools] would not be hard-wired into the commanding heights of the market and the bureaucracy as a matter of state policy, as the tender age of 28, even as the general youth unemployment rate has been 20 to 30 per cent since 1980."

The rest of the book is a statistics-packed dissection of France's institutionalized spoils system, which is lovely if you're a gently aging civil servant with a steady job security and a guarantee of early retirement to an *apartment* (and, sadly, underfunded) pension. It's hell if you're trying to get into the job market. "Under 59 per cent of French working-age adults work," Smith writes. University graduates cling to manual work in the hope of landing a full-time job that employers are terrified of offering just because they will have to pay crushing payroll costs (insurance taxes, retirement, etc.) very low in France).

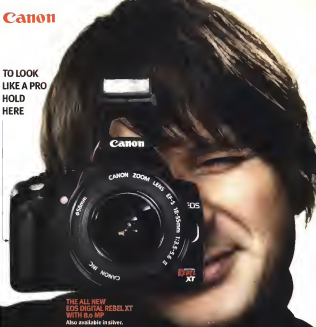
There's a reasonable case against further European integration. At some point you've up-loaded enough national sovereignty to Brussels, and you don't want to play any more. "But I don't think that's what this was about," Smith told me. "It was about the apparent threat to the much vaunted social model." What's worse, France's leaders have spent decades blaming outside forces, not their own democracy, for those policies. An open and functional Europe might have aged the forces of needed change in France. Fear of the Polish plumber might have assigned better treatment of French citizens who hope only to become French citizens.

I have no confidence in the ability or willingness of France's voters to correct. Do not mistake de Vilpelle, to address what's troubling his generation. But I know where he could turn for help. Smith's book will be published in French translation at the end of the year.

The cartoonist: David J. Phillips, from the book *France as Obedient*, by Timothy B. Smith, published by Cambridge University Press.

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